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THE GURUSHIP AND SUCCESSION OF SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

*Madanjit Kaur**

The theme of this research paper is in the form of a thesis that calls for an answer to the issues like the Sikh concept of the *Guru*, the doctrine of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as visible body of the *Guru*, the closing of personal *Guruship* and the succession of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

The Tenth Guru Gobind Singh brought to an end the line of human *Gurus* by conferring *Guruship* upon the collection of hymns which his followers used in their personal and corporate devotion and as a guide. So a movement, whose focal point was a series of Masters, became centred upon a Holy Book, henceforth known by the name of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. This was the final culmination of the Sikh concept of *Guruship*, capable of resisting the temptation of defying the line of human *Gurus*. Yet this is not in itself the whole of the story of Sikh *Guruship*.

The Sikh doctrine of *Guruship* is rooted in Indian religious tradition. But it is dynamic and distinct in form and structure. In fact, *Guruship* is a distinctive concept of Sikhism. It is a legacy of the founder Master, Guru Nanak. The Tenth master while maintaining the concept of *Shabad as Guru* also made the *Panth* distinctive by introducing corporate *Guruship*.¹ 'Though the concept of *Guruship* continued to be the core of Sikhism, the role of the human *gurus* transferred to the *Guru Panth*, and that of the revealed word to *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. This has made Sikhism a distinctive modern religion. Any other interpretation of the decision of Tenth Master to introduce the system of *Guru Granth* and *Guru Panth* would be contrary to the Sikh thesis as amplified by Ganda Singh and Harbans Singh.²

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1. W. Owen Cole, *The Guru in Sikhism*, London, 1982, pp. 37-38.
2. Ganda Singh, pages 183 to 210 and Harbans Singh, pages 211-227 in *Perspectives on Sikh Tradition*, edited by Gurdev Singh, Pub. Academy of Sikh Religion and Culture Patiala, 1986. See also Ganda Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh's Death at Nanded, An Examination of Succession Theories*, pub. by Guru Nanak Foundation, Bhatinda District, Faridkot, 1972.

The meaning of *Guruship* in Sikhism is the manifest form which God takes as preceptor of mankind. The nature of *Guruship* in the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* states that the supreme being is Himself the *Guru*, whose chosen channel for communication to humanity is the institution of the *Guru*. The Sikh *Gurus* have taken considerable pains to emphasize the point that the *bani* (the holy scripture) and not the body (the personal guru) is the *Guru*.³ Theologically, Guru Nanak had always made a distinction between himself, and the Lord as God's bard, conveying the message entrusted to him. The declaration, 'I spoke only when you, O God, inspired me to speak',⁴ is characteristic of his view of himself as God's messenger. There is no reason to believe that his successors differed from him in this view.⁵ It must always be remembered that the *Guru* of whom Guru Nanak spoke is God, self-manifested in order to reveal Himself, so that by His Grace man may reach the realm of Truth which is his destiny. The words 'Gur prasadi' in the *Mool Mantra* must be regarded as testimony to this belief.⁶ This statement is crucial to an understanding of the concept of *Guru*.⁷

The testimony of God as *Guru* which began with Guru Nanak is reaffirmed by his successor *Gurus*.⁸ However, to give this institution greater permanence and prevent future alterations, Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Guru of the Sikhs, refused to appoint any human successor and bade the Sikhs to consider the *Granth* as their *Guru*.⁹

Before his demise at Nanded in A.D. 1708, Guru Gobind Singh, terminated human succession to the office of the Guru and established instead, the condominium of the *Granth*, and the *Panth*, which ever since is recited at the conclusion of every congregational prayer, morning and evening, and on all occasions of public worship by the Sikhs :

The Order of the *Khalsa* was established as the command of the Timeless (Almighty); This is now the commandment for all the Sikhs : Accept the *Granth* as the *Guru*; know

3. Taran Singh, "The Nature of Guruship in the Guru Granth" in the *Nature of Guruship* (ed. Clarence O. McMullen), ISPCK, 1976, pp. 27-8.

4. ਤਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਕਹਣੁ ਜਾ ਤੁਝੈ ਕਹਾਇਆ ॥

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, pp. 566.

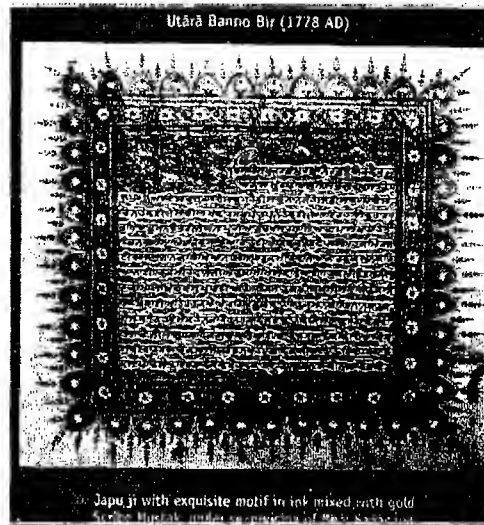
5. W. Owen Cole, *The Guru in Sikhism*, p. 55.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

7. There are explicit statements in the *bani* of Guru Nanak which indicate that God is the *Guru*. See *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 1226.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 307, 308, 317.

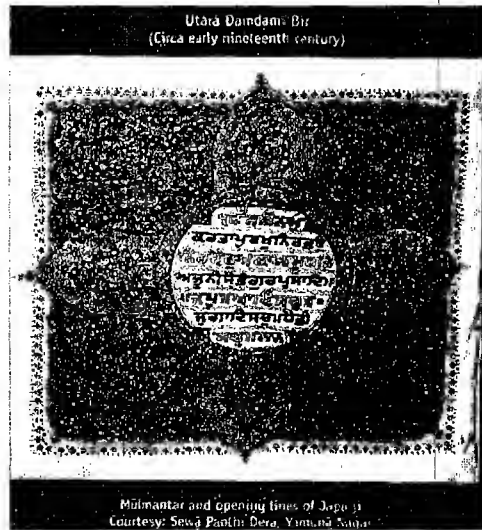
9. There is no contradiction on this point.



Utara: Bhai Banno Bir, dated 1778 A.D.

Opening page of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* depicting *Mulmantra* following 'Japuji', with exquisite border designed with floral motif in four colours, mixed with gold. A specimen of late eighteenth century Sikh art of calligraphy. Scribe *Mustak* under the supervision of Bhai Sadanand.

(Courtesy Dera Matho Murari, Dehradun. Photo Nanakshahi Collection, Mohali).



Utara : Damdami Bir dated early nineteenth century.

Mulmantra (opening hymns of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*) upto the text of the *Japuji-Nanak hosee bhee sacch*. Pertaining to this fact a *Hukamnama* (edict) was issued on March 29, 1988 by the five Singh *Sahibans*; that *Mulmantra* (the basic formula of Sikh tenets) be recited upto the hymn, *Nanak hosee bhee sacch*. A specimen of excellent symbolic design of the cosmos with Persian border in four colours hue. Sikh Calligraphy Art.

(Courtesy, Sewa Panthi Dera, Yamuna Nagar, Haryana. Photo Nanakshahi Collection, Mohali).

Guru Granth as the visible body of the *Guru*. He who hath a properly trained mind, shall find confirmation thereof in the contents of the *Sabad* (the Holy Book) itself.¹⁰

Ever since, the Sikh community has recognised no human successor to *Guruship*; they consider *Khalsa Panth* and *Guru Granth* to be a twin institution, in whom rests the joint sovereignty of the Sikh world.¹¹

Henceforth, the identity of the *Guru* has been incorporated in the doctrines of *Guru Granth* and the *Khalsa* was to provide leadership to the community (*Panth*), not in supersession of the previous *Gurus*, but as an authority to work in their names. It was invariably to guide itself by the teachings of the *Gurus* as found in the Holy *Granth*. For the Sikhs, this double aspect of *Guruship* solved the most serious problem of accepting authority of prophet as absolute and final for all times.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib is deemed as the Visible Body of the *Guru* by the Sikhs. What is the meaning of the declaration that the *Granth* is the *Guru*?

The pronouncement of *Guru Gobind Singh* was not any new innovation in the Sikh doctrine. The seed idea of the doctrine of *Guru Granth* is clearly discernible in the *bani* of the *Granth* itself. It is repeatedly stressed in various hymns that :

The 'Revelation is the *Guru* and the *Guru* is Revelation', and that 'whosoever shall accept the Revelation of the *Guru* shall behold the *Guru* himself.'¹²

It is the injunction of the *Granth* that the Sikhs are bidden to 'accept the Revelation of *Guru* as true for ever, for; it is the Revelation of God that maketh the *Guru* to utter it'.¹³ Further, it is ordained that, 'the Revelation of the *Guru* is the Light of the World, through it God's Grace descendeth

10. Tradition holds :

ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੈ ਚਲਾਯੋ ਪੰਥ॥
ਸਭ ਸਿੱਖਨ ਕੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨੀਉ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ॥
ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਮਾਨੀਉ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾ ਕੀ ਚੇਹਿ॥
ਜਾ ਕਾ ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਖ ਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮੈ ਲੇਹੁ॥

11. The *Guru Granth* is installed in the Sikh places of worship. It is symbolic of the visible body of the *Guru*. All the ceremonial paraphernalia associated with the keeping, opening and closing of the Holy Book represent manifestation of royalty and sovereignty, both temporal and spiritual.

12. ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਾਰੇ॥
ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ ਪਰਤਪਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ॥

Nat Ashtpadian, M. 4, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 982.

13. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣਹੁ
ਗੁਰਸਿਖਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪਿ ਮੁਹਹੁ ਕਢਾਏ॥

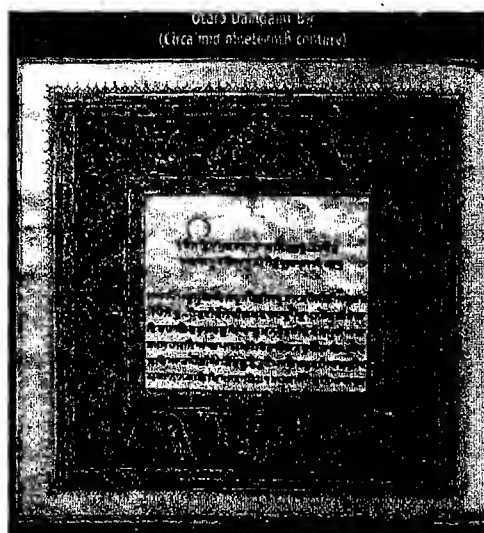
Gauri Ki var, M. 4, *ibid.*, p. 308.



Utara : Damdami Bir.

Opening page of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, decorated with beautiful border, Persian design with five colours ink. A specimen of ornamental design of Sikh calligraphy of early nineteenth century.

(Dr. Man Singh Nirankari's Collection, Manuscript Section (Gurmukhi), Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh.



Utara : Damdami Bir mid-nineteenth century.

Opening page of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, depicting Mulmantra following Japuji with a perfect border Persian design in five colours.

(Courtesy, Dr. Surinder Singh, Chandigarh. Photo Nanakshahi Collection, Mohali).

into human soul.¹⁴ The message of the Holy *Granth* is that 'the *Guru's* word abideth with soul as the water drowneth it not, and the fire consumeth it not'.¹⁵ Again it is stressed that as 'the *Guru's* revelation pervadeth in the world, it redeemeth man through the Name of God'.¹⁶

The direction in which the idea of Guruship evolved is implicit in the *bani* of the Sikh Gurus. According to Guru Nanak the *Guru* is one who had first realised the Lord and His Word.¹⁷ The Divine Message had to go to the world through the *Guru* for the emancipation of mankind.¹⁸ The true *Guru* must be the guide for conveying the Lord's message as given to him in the truest form.¹⁹

According to Guru Amar Das :

There is *Guru*, through whom the True Word had come, ponder always on the True Word of the *Guru* for guidance in life.²⁰

After explaining the *Guru's* Revelation, the Holy *Granth* identifies with the *Sabad* (or the Word of the *Guru*) that comes through human agency : the *Guru*. The term *Sabad* literally means the Word and was intended to represent God's Command :

The *Sabad* in the sense of eternal and self-existent sound, conceived as the eternal *Veda*, is an old Indian notion, rather an Ancient Aryan notion, for it is found in Zoroastrianism where the *Menthra Spenta*, the holy Word, is said to be the soul of God.²¹

14. ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਕਰਮਿ ਵਸੈ ਮਨ ਆਏ॥

Sri Rag, M. 5, *Ibid.*, p. 67.

15. ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਬਚਨੁ ਬਸੈ ਜੀਅ ਨਾਲੇ॥
ਜਲਿ ਨਹੀ ਭੂਬੈ ਤਸਕਰੁ ਨਹੀ ਲੇਵੈ ਭਾਗਿ ਨ ਸਾਕੈ ਜਾਲੇ॥

Rag Dhanasari, M. 5, *Ibid.*, p. 679.

16. ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਰਤੀ ਜਗ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਇਸੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਾਇਦਾ॥

Rag Maru, M. 3, *Ibid.*, p. 1066.

17. ਗੁਰ ਮਹਿ ਆਪੁ ਸਮੇਇ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ॥

Var Malar Ki, M. 1, *Ibid.*, p. 1279.

18. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਪੁ ਰਖਿਓਨੁ ਕਰਿ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ॥

Rag Asa, Slok, M. 1, *Ibid.*, p. 466.

19. ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਹੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ॥

Rag Tilang, M. 1, *Ibid.*, p. 722.

20. ਇਕਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਇਕੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਇਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ॥

Rag Sorath, M. 3, *Ibid.*, p. 646.

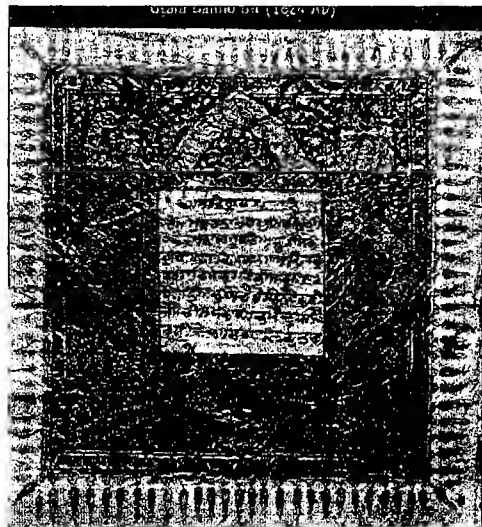
21. Kapur Singh, *Paras 'arapras' na*, (*Baisakhi* of Guru Gobind Singh). Revised edition (eds. Piar Singh and Madanjit Kaur), Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1989, p. 172.



Utara: Damdami Bir early nineteenth century

Opening page of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* embellished with Indo-Muslim combinations; design of Calligraphy with fine colours. A specimen of the early nineteenth century Sikh Art of Calligraphy.

(Dr. Man Singh Nirankari's Collection, Manuscript Section (Gurmukhi), Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh)



Utara: Bhai Banno Bir dated 1824 A.D.

Opening page of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* embellished with decorative design, symbolic drawing, Hindu Art, with Golden hue.

(Dr. Man Singh Nirankari's Collection, Manuscript Section (Gurmukhi), Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh)

Sri Guru Granth Sahib identifies *Sabad* with Divine Wisdom which forms itself as God's Light in the conscience of man. It avers that *Sabad* is the essence of things by understanding which man comprehends truth and thus becomes one with Truth.²²

The *Sabad* is dormant in the heart of every human being and it can be made manifest through the discipline of self-control and spiritual orientation.²³ The mortal human body is not to be deemed as the *Guru*; it is the Light within, that is the *Guru*. It is the *Sabad* that is the *Guru* and the guide. The absence of it results in spiritual confusion.²⁴ This *Sabad* is not variegated, it is one, for God is One and all that there is, proceeds from God.²⁵ The search and discernment of this *Sabad* is an effort worth making for man in this world, all else is waste and weariness.²⁶

It was made clear by Guru Hargobind that the Immortal frame of the *Guru* had no peculiar entity and the *Sabad* as revealed by the *Guru*, is the only authentic portrait of the *Guru*.²⁷ It is inferred from the above narration that Guru's revelation is recorded in *Sri Guru Granth* as *Sabad* or Testament. According to Sikh doctrine this testament is the *Guru*. The same principle was followed by Guru Gobind Singh when he established the condominium of the *Guru Panth* and the *Guru Granth*. Instead of appointing an individual successor to himself, he appointed the collective order of the *Khalsa* and formally recognised the status of the *Granth*, which was to be conceded as the *Guru Granth*.²⁸ This status of *Guru Granth* or *bani* had remained unaffected throughout²⁹, only the temporal direction of human affairs was given a collectively religious basis by Guru Gobind Singh.

This was the process by which the *Granth* has been institutionalised as the *Guru Granth*. The basic idea of the peculiar institution of *Guruship* of the Sikhs has remained unchanged. The *Granth*, stands for two things, revelation

22. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 1353.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 8 and 1264.

24. ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਜਗੁ ਬਉਰਾਨੀ॥

Rag Sorath, M. 1, *Ibid.*, p. 635.

25. ਏਕੈ ਸਬਦੁ ਏਕੈ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਵਰਤੈ ਸਭ ਏਕਸੁ ਤੇ ਉਤਪਤਿ ਚਲੈ॥

Rag Prabhati, M. 3, *Ibid.*, p. 1334.

26. ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਹੈ ਸਾਰੁ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਬਦੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਮੋਹੁ ਗੁਬਾਰੁ॥

Rag Prabhati, M. 1, *Ibid.*, p. 1342.

27. ਗੁਰ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੈ.....।

Bhai Gurdas, *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, ed. Bhai Vir Singh, *Khalsa Samachar Amritsar*, 1972, Var 24; 11, p. 396.

28. Kapur Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 177.

29. The Sikh tradition considers the Holy *Granth*, as the real corpus of the Transcendental Wisdom. And in this Sikh tradition follows the Buddhist principle of the identity of the Buddha's word with the essence of Buddha.

of Truth through the Word, and the interpretation and practice of the Truth through the personal lives of the *Gurus*. The truth as revealed in the *Sabad*, incorporates fundamental Truths, that is, belief in the Oneness of God and approach to Him through the love of His *Nam* and service (*sewa*). As truth never gets old, so the *Guru* in Sikhism is never relegated to the past. He is ever new and whole.³⁰ He is ever alive in the collective personality of the Sikhs working with a sense of the presence of the *Guru* in them. That is why for the Sikhs, Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, does not belong to the sixteenth century, but is a dynamic personality guiding them personally through the organisation of the *Panth*. The initiation ceremony, *Amrit*, the *Khande de Pahul* introduced by Guru Gobind, was made the basis of this reorganisation. It is evident from the above analysis that the doctrine laid down in the *Guru Granth* by the earlier Sikh Gurus³¹, was reiterated by Guru Gobind Singh, when he hailed the *Granth* as the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

The *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* contains perennial philosophy, uncontaminated by temporal and secular considerations. It is not a code of ethical or social organisation like semitic scriptures, though it strictly postulates a social context for practice of religion and enjoins a strict ethical conduct. It is not sectarian, and lays down no metaphysical propositions in support of the practices of a religion. It has a universal import. It is the perceivable record of the Transcendental Wisdom. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is a divinity, not a deity, though extreme reverence is shown to it by the Sikhs. It is regarded as the visible body of the True *Guru* and is symbolic of the Sikh doctrine of sovereignty both temporal and spiritual.

It is on account of their (Sikhs) reverence for *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* that Sikhism has maintained its integrity despite observances resulting from popular piety and the fact that much of its time it has retained its separate religio-cultural entity in a society dominated by Hinduism.

If there is any way in which Sikhism may be described as unique, it is in its elevation of a holy book to the status of *Guruship*. Guru Gobind Singh's reason for elevating the *Adi Granth* to the status of *Guru* must be linked with his creation of the *Khalsa* in 1699. But the more immediate reason may probably be found in the awareness of the *Guru* that the circumstances of his time required some radical change in the mode of Sikh leadership. Politically and socially this took the form of the *Khalsa Panth* which was invested with the

30. Teja Singh, *Sikhism : Its Ideals and Institutions*, Khalsa Brothers, Amritsar, 1970, p. 26.

31. ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥

Gujari Ki Var, M. 3, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 515.

temporal authority (*miri*), and the spiritual authority (*piri*) remained with the *gurbani*, the scripture *Granth*.

The fact that Guru Gobind Singh, Tenth and the last Guru of the Sikhs, died at Nanded in Deccan, now in Maharashtra, on October 6-7, 1708, has been substantiated by contemporary and semi-contemporary sources. It has also been authenticated beyond doubt that Guru Gobind Singh did not appoint any of his followers to succeed him as the *Guru* and that he had commanded his followers to look upon the Holy Scripture, the *Granth Sahib* as their *Guru*, thenceforth known as *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.³² During his life time, Guru Gobind Singh had created the distinctive Order of the *Khalsa*, with uncommon form and the articles of faith and helped to impart them a distinct identity. Towards the end of his life, the *Guru* had to face extremely adverse circumstances. But he knew no despondency and did not give way to frustration. He had lost all his four sons, mother and a large number of devoted followers. He left Punjab and spent his last days in the Deccan.

At the creation of the *Khalsa* on the Baisakhi day of 1699, Guru Gobind Singh had not only presented himself to be formally initiated into the fraternity of the *Khalsa* but had also submitted himself to the discipline which had been prescribed by him for the new order of the *Khalsa*. This virtually meant the surrender of the office of *Guruship* to the will of the *Khalsa* and its merger into the body politic of the new order. This was re-affirmed by the message he delivered to his followers from his death bed. This fact is affirmed by the testimony of Sainapat, who was not only a contemporary of the *Guru* but was also one of his *darbari kavis* (court poets) at Anandpur Sahib.³³ His work *Sri Gursobha*, composed in A.D. 1711, within three years of the *Guru*'s death, records :

A day before his death, the *Singhs* asked the *Guru* about the form he was adopting (or the person whom he was nominating to succeed him). In reply he said that the *Khalsa* was his very self and that to them he had granted his robe—his physical self, and that the Eternal and the Limitless Word uttered with the Lord's Light is the Supreme Master.³⁴

Sainapat, thus tells us that a day before the event the *Guru* had said that

32. Ganda Singh, 'Guru Gobind Singh Designates Guru Granth Sahib to be the *Guru*' in *Perspective on the Sikh Tradition* (ed. Gurdev Singh), p. 183.

33. Sainapat, *Sri Gursobha* (ed. Ganda Singh), Punjabi University, Patiala, 1967, Ch. XVIII, 40-44, 85-89, pp. 128-129.

34. *Ibid.*

he had bestowed his physical form upon the *Khalsa*³⁵ and that the limitless and Eternal Word was *Satguru*.³⁶ This was Guru Gobind Singh's last message and his final commandment saying in unmistakable language and clear words that he was not appointing any particular individual as the succeeding *Guru* and that the *Khalsa* under the guidance of the Divine Word—the *Gurbani*—was to be the future physical and spiritual representative of the *Guru*. This has since become the accepted creed of the Sikhs.

The account of Sainapat is supported by Bhai Nand Lal, a devoted disciple, who was present at Nanded at the time of the *Guru's* death. He tells us in his *Rehatnama* that the *Guru* told him that his one form is the formless Supreme Spirit and the other *Granth Ji—Guru Sabda*, the Word of the great *Gurus* incorporated in the holy *Granth Sahib*. 'Have no doubt about it', he said, 'the visible form is the Sikhs, the *Khalsa* should remain absorbed in the *Gurbani* day and night'.³⁷

Bhai Prahlad Singh, another associate of *Guru Gobind Singh* also corroborates the above mentioned *Guru's* commandment in his *Rehatnama* as following :

With the order of the Eternal Lord has been established the *Panth*.

All the Sikhs are hereby commanded to obey the *Granth* as the *Guru*.³⁸

Similarly Bhai Chaupa Singh, another associate of *Guru Gobind Singh*, had also mentioned this commandment in his *Rehatnama*.³⁹

35. ਖਾਲਸ ਅਪਨੇ ਰੂਪ ਬਤਾਯੋ॥ ਖਾਲਸ ਹੀ ਸੋ ਹੈ ਮਮ ਕਾਮਾ॥
ਬਖਸ ਕਿਯੋ ਖਾਲਸ ਕੇ ਜਾਮਾ॥

Gursobha, Ch. XVIII, 41, p. 170.

ਸੋ ਖਾਲਸ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹਮਾਰਾ।
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹਮਾਰਾ, ਅਪਰ ਅਪਾਰਾ, .
ਸਬਦ ਬਿਚਾਰਾ ਅਜਰ ਜਰੀ।

Ibid.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

37. ਸਬਦ ਪੜਨਾ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਣਨਾ॥ ਸਬਦ ਕਮਾਵਣਾ ਸਬਦੇ ਬਾਝਰ ਨਾਹੀ ਥਾਉ॥
ਥਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਥਾਣੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਥਾਣੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਾਰੇ॥
ਗੁਰਥਾਣੀ ਕਹੈ ਸਵੇਕ ਜਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ, ਪ੍ਰਤਖਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ॥

Bhai Nand Lal, 'Sakhi Rehat Patshahi 10', *Gur Khalsa de Rehatname*, ed. Shamsheer Singh Ashok, Sikh History Research Board, Amritsar, 1979, p. 51 (unpublished).

38. ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਬਚਨ ਸਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਚਲਾਇਉ ਪੰਥ॥
ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨ ਕਉ ਹੁਕਮ ਯਹ, ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਰੰਥ॥

Bhai Prahlad Singh, *Rehatnama Bhai Prahlad Singh Ka*, op.cit., p. 58.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

Bhai Nand Lal affirms :

ਜੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਗੁਰ ਦਰਸਨ ਕੀ ਚਾਹਿ। ਦਰਸਨ ਕਰੇ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਆਹਿ॥
ਮੇਰਾ ਰੂਪ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਜਾਣ। ਇਸ ਮੇਂ ਭੇਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੁਝ ਮਾਨ॥

Bhai Nand Lal Granthavali, *Rehatnama*, Sri Guru Vach, p. 192.

It is evident from the above mentioned contemporary evidence that Guru Gobind Singh abolished for all time to come the nomination of any one person as the *Guru* of the Sikhs. After him the *Khalsa*, with *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as their eternal *Guru*, became the *Guru Panth*. With this the personal line of *Guruship* came to an end. This historical fact has been rejected by McLeod. But there is abundant contemporary and near-contemporary evidence available for the comparative study of different versions of the events, for sifting fact from fiction and for authenticating the tradition recorded in the Sikh sources regarding the abolition of the personal *Guruship* and the succession of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as the living *Guru* of the Sikhs.

Koer Singh, the author of *Gurbilas Patshahi 10* (composed in A.D. 1751-1762) has not only supplied more details of this historical event, but has also provided clarity to the tradition. The author has accounted *Granth* as the *Guru Granth*⁴⁰ and reminds one of the *Guru's* commandment to the Sikhs to regard *Guru Granth* as Divinity.⁴¹ He tells us in explicit terms that Guru Gobind Singh discontinued the line of personal *Guruship* and did not appoint anyone to succeed him as the *Guru*. In fact, he had surrendered his personality to the *Khalsa* when he had become one of them at the baptismal ceremony. He publicly declared this merger on many occasions afterwards, and especially a little before his death at Nanded. Koer Singh also narrates at length the formal installation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as the *Guru*.⁴² The author records that the *Guru* addressed his Sikhs before his demise and instructed them that there would be no successor to him, the *Sarbat Sangat* and the *Khalsa* should deem *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as Supreme. Koer Singh further states that with five paise and a coconut in his hand the *Guru* paid homage to the Holy *Granth* and declared its succession as the *Guru*.⁴³ Koer Singh had been in close

40. ਦਿਜੈ ਦਾਨ ਭੂਖੇ, ਲਹੇ ਜਾਇ ਪਯਾਰੇ। ਦਿਵਾਨੈ ਲਗਾਵੈ, ਸੁਨੇ ਸਬਦ ਸਾਰੇ॥
ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜਾਨੇ ਸਦਾ ਅੰਗ ਸੰਗੀ। ਸੁਨੇ ਗਾਥ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਕੀ ਚੀਤ ਰੰਗੀ॥
ਜਹਾ ਧਰਮਸਾਲਾ ਤਹਾ ਨੀਤ ਜੇਯੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਦਰਸ ਕੀਜੈ ਮਹਾ ਸੂਖ ਪੈਯੈ॥

Koer Singh, *Gurbilas Pathshahi 10* (ed. Shamsheer Singh Ashok),
Punjabi University, Patiala, 1968, Ch. IX. p. 130.

41. ਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਮੁਹ ਸਿਖ ਸੁਜਾਨਾ। ਮਾਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਭਗਵਾਨਾ॥

Ibid., Ch. XXI, p. 283.

42. ਗੁਰਆਈ ਕਾ ਨਹਿ ਅਬ ਕਾਲ। ਤਿਲਕ ਨ ਦੇਵਹਿਗੇ ਕਿਸ ਭਾਲ॥
ਸਰਬ ਸੁ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਖਾਲਸ ਮਾਨ। ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਸਿਕੇਤੁ ਗੋਦ ਮੈ ਜਾਨ॥
ਲੜ ਪਕੜਾਇ ਸਬਦ ਕਾ ਰੂਪ। ਜੋ ਮਾਨੇ ਸੋ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੂਪ॥
ਦਰਸਨ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਹੋ ਸਵਧਾਨ। ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਮਾਨ॥

Ibid., p. 284.

43. ਤਬ ਪੁਨਿ ਆਪ ਉਠੇ ਸਭ ਸੰਗਾ। ਪੈਸੇ ਪਾਂਚ ਨਲੀਏਰ ਸੁ ਅੰਗਾ॥
ਲੋ ਕੇ ਤਾਹਿ ਅਰਪ ਕੀ ਬੰਦਨ। ਪ੍ਰਦੱਖਨ ਕਰਤੇ ਮਨ ਰੰਗਨ॥
ਕਹਾ, ਜੋਇ ਬਚ ਕੀਨਾ ਚਾਹੇ। ਪਾਠ ਕਰੈ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਸੂਖ ਪਾਏ॥
ਯਾ ਸਮ ਅੰਰ ਕੋਈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਹੀ। ਬਿਨਾ ਕਾਨ ਸਚੁ ਬਾਕ ਭਨਾਹੀ॥
ਯੱਦਪਿ ਰਾਜੇ ਕੇ ਹੋਇ ਪਾਸ। ਤਦਪਿ ਨ ਚਾਹੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਤਾਸ॥

Ibid.

association with Bhai Mani Singh who was a contemporary and a close associate of Guru Gobind Singh. Bhai Mani Singh was the first person to act as the *Granthi* (reader of Holy *Granth Sahib*) in the Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar after the Guru's death. Therefore, the information passed on from Bhai Mani Singh to Koer Singh is believed to be fully reliable.

Another work, which we may refer to here, is *Bansavalinama* of Kesar Singh Chhibbar (completed in A.D. 1769). Kesar Singh's ancestors had been in the service of Guru Gobind Singh as *dewans*. He claims to have seen and consulted in his early days a *behi* (account book) of the house of the Guru. The tenth chapter of *Bansavalinama* deals with the life of Guru Gobind Singh. In stanzas 678-83, the author mentions the demise of the Guru and his last commandment in reply to the question of the Sikhs as following :

"The *Granth* is the *guru*; you hold the garment (seek the protection) of the Timeless God".⁴⁴ Two hours later the Guru went to heaven; his Light blended with Light. The same night he was cremated after he had been bathed in rose water.⁴⁵

Further, the account of the demise of Guru Gobind Singh as given in *Mahima Parkash* by Sarup Dass Bhalla may be accepted as historical and objective. This account was completed in A.D 1830 B.K./A.D. 1773. The author was a descendant of Guru Amar Das, the third Guru of the Sikhs. The account given in *Mahima Parkash* is objective and without any poetic embellishments and supernatural elements. Therefore, the evidence of this author can be accepted as historically correct. According to *Mahima Parkash*, before his demise, Guru Gobind Singh called his Sikhs to his presence and said :

Our ten forms have come to an end. Now recognize the Guru *Granth Sahib* in my place. He who wishes to talk to me should read the *Granth Sahib*. I have entrusted you to the lap of the Almighty.⁴⁶

44. ਬੇਚਨੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਿ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਲੜ ਪਕੜੋ ਅਕਾਲ॥
ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ॥

ਆਗਿਆ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਬੋਝਨਾ॥

Kesar Singh Chhibbar, *Bansavali-nama Dasan Patshahian Ka* (ed. R.S. Jaggi) pub. in Parakh, Research Bulletin of Punjabi Language and Literature, Punjab University, Chandigarh, Vol. II, 1972, Ch. 10, Stanzas 679 and 680, pp. 163-64.

45. *Ibid.*, Stanza 682, p. 164.

46. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦੀਨ ਦਿਆਲ ਬਚਨ ਕੀਤਾ।

ਜੋ ਦਸ ਸਰੂਪ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਪੂਰਨ ਭਏ।

ਅਬ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਹਗ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਿਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੋ ਜਾਨਨਾ॥

Sarup Dass Bhalla, *Mahima Parkash*, Vol. II, Ch. 'Sakhian Patshahi Das, Sakhi 27, pp. 891-93.

Then follows the account of the departure of Guru Gobind Singh from this world. The author concludes the narration by recording that the Guru's body was then cremated and the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* was recognized in place of the Guru.

This simple account of the demise of the Guru and the succession of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* agrees in all its essentials with the contemporary and the later accounts.

Dr. Ganda Singh has referred to another reliable authority. Munshi Sant Singh's *Bayan-i-Khandan-i-Nishan-Bedian* (account of the Bedi family of the Una). According to it when Guru Gobind Singh was about to pass away from this mortal world at *Nanded* in the Deccan (*Katik Sudi 5, 1765 Bikrami*), all the *Singhs* and disciples asked him as to who would be the future Guru. The Guru replied; '*Guru Khalsa, Khalsa Guru*'. Then the Guru, with five *paise* and a coconut in his hand, bowed before the *Guru Granth Sahib* and said, 'Ye all community should recognize the *Guru Granth Sahib* as the *Guru* after me and obey the commandments contained therein'. And then he uttered the following couplet :

Recognize the *Guru Granth* as the visible body of the *Guru*.

By this statement the author of *Bayan* has reiterated the last commandment of Guru Gobind Singh in the words of Bhai Nand Lal who was present at *Nanded* at the time of the Guru's departure for heavenly abode.⁴⁷ The other details are identical to the tradition recorded in *Gurbilas Patshahi 10* by Koer Singh.

The tradition incorporated in the Sikh sources is also found in historical works in Persian and English. The Persian works are written both by Muslim and Hindu scholars belonging to Punjab or its neighbourhood. As most of them had first-hand knowledge of the tradition, beliefs, practices and ceremonies of the Sikhs, they cannot be ignored by students of history.

The news of the demise of Guru Gobind Singh has been mentioned in Royal Court News of the *Mughals—Akhbarat-i-darbar-i-Mu'alla* of October-November 1708 and the *Bahadur Shah Nama*.⁴⁸

Contemporary Persian accounts of Mirza Muhammad Harisi's- *Ibrat Namah* (1705-19 A.D.) and Sayyed Mohammad Qasim Hussain Lahauri's *Ibrat Nama* (1722 A.D.) and *Ibrat Maqal* (1731 A.D.) written within couple

47. Ganda singh, *op.cit.*, in *Perspective on the Sikh Tradition*, pp. 198-199.

48. William Irvine, *Later Mughals*, Calcutta, 1992, Vol. I, p. 90; also Ganda Singh *op.cit.*, in *Perspective on the Sikh Tradition*, p. 189.

of years of the demise of Guru Gobind Singh, respectively record the usual account of Guru's death at Nanded.⁴⁹

Muhammad Ali Khan Ansari, the author of *Tarikh-i-Mazaffari* (1810 A.D.) and *Tarikh-i-Bahr-ul-Mawwaj*, narrates the history of the Mughals to the beginning of the reign of Akbar Shah II. These works deal extensively with the struggle of the Sikhs against the Mughals and the Afghans. They are considered to be important sources on the history of the Punjab during the eighteenth century. Before the end of Guru Gobind Singh's account, Muhammad Ali Khan writes that :

After him (Guru Gobind Singh), according to the faith of these people (the Sikhs), the descending of *Guruship* and of internal spiritual line came to end and the book, the *Granth*, was established in place of the Guru.⁵⁰

Besides, Ahmad bin Muhammad Ali's *Mirat-ul-Ahwal-Jahan Numa* (A.D. 1810) also mentions :

The sons of Guru Gobind Singh had been killed in the battle of Alamgir. After him there is no *Khalifah* (successor guru).⁵¹

The conventional version is also supported by Hindu authors of Persian works. Rai Chatarman, the author of the *Chahar Gulshan Akhbar-un-Nawadir* (also known as the *Chahar Gulshan* or *Khulasat-un-Nawadir*) (compiled in A.D. 1759) writes in this context that :

There are ten persons (to be recognized). These ten *Khalifas* (*gurus*) are called *Das Mahal*. Anyone else sitting on the *gaddi* after them is not acceptable to them (the Sikhs).⁵²

Harsukh Rai, the author of *Maima-ul-Akhbar* (A.D. 1799) says about Guru Gobind Singh that :

He is the Tenth *Mahal* and is the last *Zahur* (successor) of Guru Nanak.⁵³

The traditional version accounted in Sikh and Persian sources is also incorporated in European accounts. George Forster has also referred to the Guru in his letter No. XI of 1783 in his *A Journey from Bengal to England* and says :

49. Ganda Singh, op.cit., in *Perspective on the Sikh Tradition*, pp. 200-210.

50. *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari*, p. 152, also *Bahr-ul-Mawwaj*, p. 208.

51. As quoted by Ganda Singh, op.cit., p. 201.

52. Rai Chatarman, *Chahar Gulshan Akhbar-un-Nawadir*, pp. 35-36 as quoted by Ganda Singh, op.cit., in *Perspective on the Sikh Tradition*, p. 201.

53. Harsukh Rai, *Maima-ul-Akhbar*, p. 481 as quoted by Ganda Singh, op.cit., in *Perspective on the Sikh Tradition*, p. 201.

Govind died in 1708 at the town of Nanded without leaving any male issue and a tradition delivered to the Sikques, limiting their priests to the number of ten, inducing them to appoint no successors to Govind Singh.⁵⁴

Talking about the change in the inscription on the Sikh coinage, Major James Browne (1787-88) has casually referred to Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh as the first and the last Gurus of the Sikhs and has indirectly given us confirmation of the belief of the Sikhs.⁵⁵

Indian historians of the nineteenth century who compiled their accounts at the instance of Europeans are supposed to have recorded correct and reliable information because their purpose was to make the English rulers acquainted with the Sikhs with whom they (English) expected to come in close political contact in the future.

Khushwaqt Rai's *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*, also called the *Kitab-i-Twarikh-i-Punjab* (written in A.D. 1811) says that Guru Gobind Singh passed away at Abchal Nagar, Nanded :

This event, that is his death, took place on Kartik Sudi 5, 1765 *Bikrami*. The generation (of *Gurus*) of Guru Nanak up to Guru Gobind Singh came to end.⁵⁶

Ahmad Shah Batalia, author of *Tawarikh-i-Hind : Bayan-i-Ahwal-i-Mulk-Hind wa-Maluk-i-an-az-Zaman-i-qadim-ta* (1233 *Hijri*) has devoted a part of his account to the Sikhs. The section *Zikar-i-Guruan wa ibtida-i-Singhan wa Mazhab-i-eshan*, forms an appendix to *Daftar I* and *II* of the *Umdat-ut-Twarikh* by Munshi Sohan Lal Suri (the court historian of Maharaja Ranjit Singh). Ahmad Shah Batalia writes that Guru Gobind Singh, who had accompanied Emperor Bahadur Shah to the Deccan, died at Nanded in 1765 *Bikrami* (A.D. 1708) and this place was known as Abchal Nagar. Some Sikhs lived there. The Nizam of Hyderabad had fixed a daily allowance for them. Maharaja Ranjit Singh also made big donations for the upkeep of the sanctuary and the maintenance of its custodians.⁵⁷

Sohan Lal Suri tells us that during the last moments of Guru Gobind Singh's life a disciple of his asked him to whom he had appointed as *Guru* after him. Thereupon the Guru replied that :

54. George Forster, *A Journey From Bengal to England*, London 1798, Vol. I, p. 263.

55. James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sicks* (India tracts), London, 1788, pp. VI, VIII.

56. Khushwaqt Rai, *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*, (MS, 1869 B.K.), pp. 366, 379.

57. Ahmad Shah Batalia, *Tawarikh-i-Hind*, (MS, 1233 AH), Appendix p. 11.

The *Guru* is *Granth Ji*. There is no difference between the *Granth* and the *Guru*. From the *darshan* of *Granth Ji* one shall have the happy *darshan* of the *Guru Sahib*.⁵⁸

This version is also confirmed by the Muslim historian of the nineteenth century. Ghulam Muhy-ud-Din alias Bute Shah in his *Tawarik-i-Punjab* (1848)⁵⁹ and Mufti-Ali-ud-Din in his *Ibrat Namah* (1854)⁶⁰ have both recorded the demise of Guru Gobind Singh as an historical fact. Bute Shah in his abridged recension of the *Tawarik-i-Punjab* (preserved in the Punjab Public Library, Lahore) has followed Lala Sohan Lal's *Umdat-ul-Tawarikh* in recording the last commandment of the *Guru* regarding the *Granth* being the *Guru* after his death and that 'there is no difference between the *Guru* and the *Granth*'.⁶¹

Kanhaiya Lal Hindi's *Zafar Namah-i-Ranjit Singh* is another study. He writes, Guru Gobind Singh died at Abchal Nagar in 1765 and that no one (of his disciples) succeeded him to the *gaddi* (*Guruship*). With him ended the *gaddi* of leadership (*masand-i-sarwari*) and with him came to end the custom of the succession of *Gurus* (*Shewa-i-rehbari*).⁶²

All the European historians of the nineteenth century like John Malcolm, W.G. Osborne, W.L. M'Gregor, Joseph David Cunningham and others who have written on the Sikhs have accepted the above version regarding the demise of Guru Gobind Singh, abolition of the personal *Guruship* and the succession of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as the *Guru* of the Sikhs.

Even Ernest Trumpp, whose observations are very negative on various aspects of the religious literature of the Sikhs, has adopted this tradition. In this context; he writes that at the time of his demise. Guru Gobind Singh told his followers :

I have entrusted the whole society (of the disciples) to the Timeless. After me you shall everywhere mind the Book of the *Granth Sahib* as your *Guru*. Whatever you shall ask, it will show to you. Whosoever be my disciple, he shall consider the *Granth* as the form of the *Guru*. Having uttered these verses he closed his eyes and expired (A.D. 1708).⁶³

Muslim historians of the nineteenth century have also accepted this version. Syed Muhammed Latif, author of *the History of the Punjab* also records that some time before the death of Guru Gobind Singh when Sikhs

58. *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, Arya Press, Lahore, 1885, Vol. 1, pp. 64-65.

59. See, Bute Shah, *Tawarikh-i-Punjab*, (MS, A.D. 1848), Vol. 1, p. 206.

60. See, Ali-ud-Din, *Ibrat Namah*, (MS, A.D. 1845), Vol. 1, p. 178.

61. Bute Shah, *Tawarikh-i-Punjab*, (Abridged recension), p. 62.

62. Kanhaiya Lal Hindi, *Zafar Namah-i-Ranjit Singh*, Lahore, 1876, p. 52.

63. Ernest Trumpp, *The Adi Granth* (Eng. Tr.), London, 1877, pp. XC vi.

asked him as to who would be the Guru after him, while breathing his last the Guru replied :

I entrust my *Khalsa* to the Divine Being... The *Granth* shall support you under all your trouble and adversities in this world, and a sure guide to you hereafter. The Guru shall dwell with the society of disciples, the *Khalsa*, and wherever there shall be five Sikhs gathered together, there shall the *Guru* be also present. The Guru also ordered them that: they must have belief in One God and look on the *Granth* as His inspired law.....He then closed his eyes and began to pray, and expired in the performance of his devotion.⁶⁴

It is concluded from the above analytical study of the various historical sources at our disposal that :

- (i) The institution of *Guruship* of the Sikhs follows a planned process and a theological concept fundamental to Sikhism from the times of Guru Nanak.
- (ii) Guru Gobind Singh did not appoint any mortal successor to succeed him as *Guru*.
- (iii) The Tenth Guru had invested the *Guru Granth* with *Guruship*, and commanded the Sikhs to accept it as their future *Guru*.
- (iv) The closing of personal *Guruship* and the succession of *Guru Granth Sahib* was not an innovation, but only an iteration of the doctrine of *Guruship* as revealed in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.
- (v) The announcement of the doctrine of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as perpetual authority became the integral focus of the psyche of the Sikh community. The installation of the Holy Scripture as the *Guru* was a most significant development in the history of the Sikh community. The Sikhs were ordained to live their religion in response to the doctrines enshrined in the *Adi Granth (Sri Guru Granth Sahib)* and observe their faith accordingly. This pronouncement of Guru Gobind Singh shaped the intellectual and cultural environment of the Sikhs and determined the guarantee of the community's integration and permanence in the course of its history.

This paper aims to explore W.H. McLeod's thesis, put forward in his *Evolution of the Sikh Community*⁶⁵ whereby he rejects the tradition of vesting

64. Syad Muhammed Latif, *History of the Punjab*, Calcutta, 1891, p. 269.

65. W.H. McLeod, *The Evolution of the Sikh Community*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1975.

the authority of *Guruship* to the Holy Scripture, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* by the Tenth Guru, Gobind Singh. McLeod has supported his view on the authority of J.S. Grewal.⁶⁶ According to McLeod :

The tradition which conferred his (Guru Gobind Singh's) personal authority upon the sacred scripture and the corporate *Panth* may perhaps be a retrospective interpretation, a tradition which owes its origin not to an actual pronouncement of the Guru but to an insistent need for maintaining the *Panth*'s cohesion during the later period.⁶⁷

McLeod asserts his conclusion in no less emphatic terms by suggesting that :

The slate must be wiped clean and must not be reinforced until we have ascertained just what did take place during the eighteenth century.⁶⁸

McLeod's conjectures seek to cloud the historical interpretation of the events related to the religious history of the Sikhs. In fact, McLeod is primarily interested in the political history of the Sikhs and the role played by the Jat community therein. In order to consolidate his so called Jat thesis, McLeod concentrates on the development of the events in the history of the Sikh community in the eighteenth century and tries to coordinate historical development with the motivation of the Jat leadership emerging out of political exigencies. However, he totally ignores the legacy and the heritage of the *Guru* period. It seems, McLeod is neither familiar with the social process of the evolution of Sikhism, nor of the nature of Sikh ethos. Besides, McLeod has not brought any historical evidence to substantiate his thesis for rejecting the succession of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as declared by Guru Gobind Singh. On the other hand, we find solid evidence encompassed in the doctrine of *Guruship* as revealed in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, later reiterated by Guru Gobind Singh when he hailed the *Granth* as the *Guru*. Besides, it has also been authenticated by contemporary and near contemporary sources, documents and records that Guru Gobind Singh did not appoint any person to succeed him as *Guru* and that he had invested *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* with *Guruship* and had commanded the Sikhs to accept it as their *Guru*.

66. J.S. Grewal, *From Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1982, Ch. XIV, pp. 100-105.

67. McLeod, *op.cit.*, p. 17.

68. McLeod, *op.cit.*, p. 16.

A.C. BANERJEE'S PERSPECTIVE ON GURU NANAK DEV

*Inderpal Sekhon**

In the 20th century, considerable number of Bengali scholars showed serious concern for the history and religion of the Sikhs. Generally, they belonged to the school of nationalist historiography. Significantly few among them devoted themselves to the Sikh and Punjab Studies. On the whole, they owe much to the Sikh historiography as they have added new perspective to the Sikh studies and have added a new dimension to our understanding of the Sikh history of the Guru period. Moreover, even the Sikh studies in Bengali spreading over a hundred and seventy years, have had a salutary impact on teaching and a research concerning the history of the Sikhs in this part of India. It was quite in keeping with this tradition that a university of Calcutta played a pioneering role in the field of historical enquiry¹. The earliest work produced was N.K. Sinha's *Ranjit Singh* in English, first published in 1933². It was followed by Indubhusan Banerjee's *Evolution of Khalsa* (two volumes)³, N.K. Sinha's *Rise of the Sikh Power*⁴, Niharranjan Ray's *The Sikh Gurus and Sikh Society*.⁵

Anil Chandra Banerjee was born in 1910. He retired in 1975 as Professor of Indian History from Jadavpur University after holding centenary professorship of international relation at Calcutta University. He has written a large number of books on different aspects of Indian history. He had great interest in the Punjab history. His first book of Sikh history was '*Anglo-Sikh relations*' which was published in 1949. After this, he wrote more books on Sikh history such as *Guru Nanak and His Times*⁶; *Guru Nanak*

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1. T.O. Connell, Milton Israel, Willard G. Oxtoby, (ed.) *Sikh History and Religion in the twentieth century*, Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1990, p. 132.
2. N.K. Sinha *Ranjit Singh*, A. Mukherjee & Co., Ltd, Calcutta, 1933 (First Edition)
3. I.B. Banerjee, *Evolution of The Khalse* Vol. 1: The Foundation of Sikh Panth, Mukherjee & Co., Calcutta, 1963 Second Edition & 1972 third Edition.
4. N.K. Sinha *Rise of Sikh power*, Calcutta, A Mukherjee & Co., 1936.
5. Niharranjan Ray, *The Sikh Gurus and Sikh Society*, Punjabi University Patiala, 1970.
6. *Guru Nanak and His Times*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1971.

to *Guru Gobind Singh*⁷; *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Religion*⁸; and *The Khalsa Raj*⁹.

Guru Nanak and his times was published in 1971. This book is an expanded version of Sita Ram Kohli lectures delivered by him at Punjabi University Patiala, in March, 1970, under the auspices of the Department of Punjab Historical studies.¹⁰ In this book, he has dealt with various aspects concerning Guru Nanak such as the political condition of his times, the Bhakti cult and the Sikhism, Society and religion in the Punjab, life of Guru Nanak, Teachings of Guru Nanak and the place of Guru Nanak in Indian History.

In the first chapter, A.C. Banerjee describes the political condition before Guru Nanak as well as during his lifetime. In his view "Guru Nanak lived in an age of political disintegration and crisis". Punjab had neither peace nor effective government Nothing could be more vivid than his own comment:

This age is like a drawn sword, the kings are butchers,
goodness hath taken wings and flown.¹¹

It was continuously a prey to foreign invasions and internal anarchy. There was no central, but only the regional rules who presided over the destiny of different parts of the country. The Lodhis had then roots in Punjab and played the role of local dynasty to some extent. Some verses of Guru Nanak offer us a glimpse into the actual sufferings of the common people.¹²

A kingdom that was a jewel
was wasted by the dogs
No one will mourn their passings

Bhai Gurdas writes in the third *Var* that people had become selfish, narrow minded, proud and cynical. Macauliffe said that the advent of Guru Nanak was the signal of a new awakening.¹³

A.C. Banerjee has also discussed political aspects concerning the reign of Delhi Sultanat; Timur's invasion; the Lodhis regime; and the invasion of Babur in India. Banerjee states that the Sultanat of Delhi lost its all India character during the weak reign of Firoz Shah Tuglaq and became a provincial

7. *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, Rajesh Publication, New Delhi, 1978.

8. *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Religion*, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1983.

9. *The Khalsa Raj*. Abhinav publications, New Delhi, 1983.

10. A.C. Banerjee, "Preface", *Guru Nanak and his Times*, Punjabi University Patiala, 1971 (First edition).

11. Khushwant Singh, *Hymns of Guru Nanak*, p. 99.

12. M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*..... S.Chand & Co., New Delhi (Oxford, 1909), Vol. 1, p. 252.

13. M.A. Macauliffe, *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 235.

kingdom. The image of political unity appeared to be irretrievable lost. His worthless successors were incapable even of maintaining the truncated heritage which he had left.¹⁴ Banerjee talks of the geographical location of the Punjab as well. He states that geographical location made the Punjab province the gateway to India throughout the ages when the sea was not used as a highway to this sub continent.¹⁵ The rich city of Delhi, the invader's primary target, lay at the south east corner of the Punjab. Naturally, it became the principal scene of Timur's policy of devastation and then Banerjee mentions that after the Timur's invasion the Sultanat of Delhi became a very pale shadow of its former self. Not only did it shrink in size and became a petty kingdom around Delhi; the Tugluq ruler did not enjoy even the ceremonial respect which was accorded to the later Mughals.¹⁶

In regard to Lodhis, Banerjee states that it lacked the military strength, administrative consolidation and political wisdom which were needed to initiate a new era of peace, stability and progress in the Punjab.¹⁷ The Punjab of the Lodhi was a moth-eaten territory. The administration was in the hands of king-like nobles who could deal with the common people just as they pleased.¹⁸

Banerjee also throws light on the advent of Babur and on the establishment of Mughal empire in India. He states that the Mughal rule brought peace and prosperity to the Punjab.¹⁹ But he does not fail to mention about the atrocities committed by the Muslim on the Hindus. He Like I.B. Banerjee, has cited instance of sacrifice of Brahmin Bodhan.²⁰

In his chapter on Bhakti cult and Sikhism, A.C. Banerjee writes about the Bhakti movement in medieval India and different sects and cults prevailing at that time. He has underlined their relations or their similarities with Sikhism suggesting that the latter was a part of the movement of social regeneration. He suggests that Sikhism had strong links with the Bhakti cult. He writes that Namdev, the great Bhagat of Maharashtra had settled in the Punjab in his last years and the compositions of Ramananda and Kabir occupy much space in Guru Granth Sahib. But at the same he writes, that the Sikh Panth had distinctive characteristics which were entirely lacking in the *sampradaya* constituted by the followers of Ramananda, Kabir and Chaitanya. On the

14. A.C. Banerjee, *Op.cit*, p. 1.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

16. A.C. Banerjee, *Guru Nanak and his Times*, 1971, p.5.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

19. *Ibid.*, p.21.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

whole, he opines that The Sikhs developed a new way of life which gave them a new identity as a social group²¹. Moreover A.C. Banerjee expresses his view that the founder of Sikhism introduced a concept of Guruship which was fundamentally different from the traditional idea of spiritual guidance by individual Gurus. The continuity of single spiritual personality through a succession of different physical personalities provided a bond of unity²². The emphasis on the futility of rituals simplified and purified religion. The rejection of caste, frank recognition of equality of man, admission of women to a respectable status in the family, also in the society, insistence on earning one's own bread and sharing it with others—these indicated a striking departure from the familiar norms of medieval society.

In his discussion on the society and religion in the Punjab Banerjee states that the Hindus were socially and racially discriminated. Between Hinduism and Islam, the two major religions, both had long conflict socially and religiously. The influx of Islamic rule in India gave a severe blow to Hinduism. Hinduism had lost its old capacity for adjustment with new situations. It was the prisoner of the past, incapable of releasing fresh ideas and forces of rejuvenation.²³

A.C. Banerjee also mentions that due to caste system that prevailed among the Hindus, Islam opened its door wider to receive the lower castes among the Hindus who had been suffering for centuries from various types of social tyranny.

Regarding the position of women, A.C. Banerjee states that 'in this age of darkness' Hindu society did not accord to women the respect which was due to them. The cruel practice of 'Sati' was prevalent. However, he has underlined that Guru Nanak's recognition of the social status of women is a pleasant and meaningful departure from medieval ideas.²⁴

A.C. Banerjee has also discussed about the socio-religious life of the Muslim community. It was dominated by the Ulama, who also played an important role in politics.²⁵ The Sayyids or the persons claiming descent from the prophet, constituted a highly respected social group. Banerjee also mentions about the degeneration of the Ulama caused due to involvement in politics.

21. *Ibid.*, p.171.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

23. *Ibid.*, 72.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

25. *Ibid.*, p.79.

In A.C. Banerjee's view Sufism was the most interesting feature of Islam during Guru Nanak's age. The Sufis were the mystics deriving their name from the garments of coarse wool (*suf*) which they wore as a badge of poverty (*Faqr*). However, they did not form an organized sect, nor did they have any uniform code of religious doctrines.

Moreover, Banerjee writes that the variety of their ideas and practices was due to the intermixture of Quranic, Christian, neo-platonic, zoroastrian, Buddhist and Hindu elements. Vedanta also contributed to their ideas and some yogic practices such as 'Pranayama' were an integral part of their spiritual discipline.²⁶ Sufism has been rightly compared to a stream which gathers volume by the joining of tributaries from many lands.²⁷ From the thirteenth century onwards two Sufi Orders- the Chistis and the Suhrawardis exercised considerable influence on religious thoughts and literary activity, particularly in north western India. Banerjee also mentions the differences that occurred in Sufism. In his view Sufism was weakened by differences among its several Orders. These differences covered secular activities as well as religious practices.²⁸

A.C. Banerjee has tried to correlate the teachings of Guru Nanak with the religious ideas and beliefs of the Jogis or the kanphatas and thus writes that the teachings of Guru Nanak and the doctrines of the Jogis have certain common features.²⁹

This brief survey shows that religious life in the Punjab in the days of Guru Nanak did not lack in variety and even richness. He writes that Perhaps in other province of India, there was so much scope for intermingling of religious ideas and practices.³⁰

In his chapter on the 'life of Guru Nanak' A.C. Banerjee has given the details of various aspects of his biography. First of all, he has discussed about the sources available to him regarding the life of Guru Nanak. He states that the earliest account of Guru Nanak's life, written by a Muslim is to be found in *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*. He, however, did not find it a satisfactory account, though, in his view, its author was liberal minded and a friend of the sixth Guru. In A.C. Banerjee's view the author of *Dabistan* does not 'misrepresent Guru Nanak's character from sectarian motives.'³¹ In regard to the *Adi Granth*

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

27. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on India Culture*, Allahabad, 1936, p. 63.

28. A.C. Banerjee, *Op.cit.*, p. 87.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

30. *Loc. cit.*

31. A.C. Banerjee, *Ibid.*, p. 99.

as a source of Guru Nanak's life, he writes that "The Adi Granth contains as many as 974 compositions of Guru Nanak, but references to biographical details are quite scanty.³² The most important historical references are to be found in the verses collectively known as Baburvani. These compositions relate to a single incident, but are helpful in respect of reconstruction of the sequence of incidents in the Guru's life as they are given in the *Janam Sakhis*.³³ A.C. Banerjee found the *vars* of Bhai Gurdas of much more eulogistic nature than to be descriptive.

About the *Janam sakhis* as a source for the biography of Guru Nanak Banerjee has mentioned that in spite of their generous concession to miracles and legends, they constitute our principal source of information in regard to the incidents of Guru Nanak's life.³⁴ He, however, has considered the *Janam sakhis* as hagiographical-not biographical-literature. Highlighting their historical value Banerjee writes that they fill up the vacuum created by the absence of historical chronicles and they throw light on popular customs and beliefs in the Punjab in the first half of the seventeenth century.³⁵ Each *sakhi* usually deals with a single incident. A number of *sakhis* are normally put together in chronological order, but the sequence is not always logical as well planned. There is very little literary quality in those compositions. Indeed, it has been said that they were 'written by semi-literate scribes' for the benefit of an wholly illiterate people.³⁶

A.C. Banerjee comments on the *Janamsakhi* literature as a source and states that we know nothing about the authors of the *Janam-Sakhis* in the original form, their date of composition, and the primary sources on which they were based. It is not unlikely that some at least among them passed through several hands before reaching their present form. He writes that this implies a process of change, involving addition and deletion at different stages.³⁷ On the basis of the study of sources, A.C. Banerjee has discussed about the life of Guru Nanak; he writes about Guru Nanak's service at Sultanpur, his spiritual enlightenment, his travels or the missionary tours or travels (*Udasis*). After the *Udasis* Guru Nanak returned to Kartarpur where

32. *Loc. cit.*

33. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

35. A.C. Banerjee, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Religion*, New Delhi, 1983, p. 96.

36. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Princeton and London, 1963, Vol. 1, p. 299.

37. A.C. Banerjee, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Religion*, p.105.

he put aside all the garments of renunciation and followed the life of a householder.³⁸

In A.C. Banerjee's view Guru Nanak was a revolutionary not a reformer. This issue is highly debatable. Banerjee writes that Guru Nanak opposed altogether current Hindu customs such as pilgrimages. He rejected the sanctity of the Vedas, the puranas and the Quran. He was also opposed to asceticism. During his period of travels, he was temporarily cut off from the normal householder's life, but at the end of every *udasi* (travel) he came back to his family. When the period of travels came to an end, he finally settled at Kartarpur.³⁹

Banerjee writes that Guru Nanak did not aim directly and specifically at the removal of social injustice. His purpose was to lay down a path for Man's spiritual journey. For admission to that track no social qualifications, no high rank in the social hierarchy would be needed, a craving for spiritual bliss would be the only passport if not total elimination of the caste system which crippled human dignity and formed a dyke against spiritual regeneration. Banerjee has quoted Bhai Gurdas who writes "By the Guru's instruction, the four castes were blended in one society of saints. By blending of the four castes in one society of saints he means not the immediate removal of the traditional social classification or of external social distinctions but the elimination of caste as a factor in spiritual life. Although the application of this principle would be limited in the sphere of religion it could not but have a powerful impact on society as a whole. That was a necessary consequence of the radical change of outlook derived from Guru Nanak's teachings. Complete elimination of a system which had been the basis of Hindu society for many centuries was extremely difficult, if not impossible; but orthodoxy could hardly resist a break in the citadel. Thus, in Banerjee's view Guru Nanak prepared the ground for a social revolution even though he did not directly and deliberately initiate it. The seed sown by him developed into a plant in the days of Guru Gobind Singh.⁴⁰

For A.C. Banerjee the story of Guru Nanak's life and achievement has no parallel in the annals of this ancient land.⁴¹ He writes that it is not enough to call him the greatest of the sons of the Punjab.⁴² He must be counted among the greatest of the sons of the India. He was the founder of the last of the

38. *Loc. cit.*

39. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

40. A.C. Banerjee, *Guru Nanak and his Times*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1971, p. 176.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

42. Cf. W.H. McLeod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, Delhi (Reprint), 1963. p.6.

great religions of the world.⁴³ He quotes Surendra Nath Banerjee who delivered a lecture in Calcutta in which he spoke of Nanak as 'the spiritual founder of the Sikh Empire,'⁴⁴ He planted a poetical sapling which has blossomed into one of the great literatures of India. He laid the foundations of a brotherhood which has enriched our national heritage by struggle against religious intolerance, social injustice and denial of political freedom. History must pay its homage to one who in serving God served his country so well.⁴⁵

A.C. Banerjee's book *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh* published in 1978 contains fifteen essays on Sikh history and religion; they were written during the period from years 1943 to 1975. In his essay on the 'Baba Farid and Sikh religion' Banerjee has tried to correlate the teachings of the Sufis with that of the Sikh religion. He writes that Baba Farid was born in 1175 AD at *Kahtwal* and as per Macauliffe's life sketch of Baba Farid, he was the third descendant of the Chisti Silsilah. His educational and spiritual development was marked by his residence of Multan.

In his essays on "Inter religious Relations in Medieval India", "Sikhism and Bengal Vaishnavism", A.C. Banerjee writes about the evolution of Bhakti movement in medieval India as well as about different sects and cults that existed at that time. He underlines their relations or their similarities with that of Sikhism obviously, suggesting that Sikhism was a part of the movement of social regeneration.

A.C. Banerjee has also discussed about 'Guru Nanak and the problems of his age and Guru Nanak and the Yogis, in two of his essays. He talks about the empty rituals of a religion and the turbulent political period, and writes that such was the inhospitable atmosphere in which the founder of Sikhism passed the first three decades of his life and experienced a name of divine call.⁴⁶

For Banerjee in the Hindu society, caste and religion were inseparable since times immemorial. That caste should be looked upon as a problem, Guru Nanak strongly opposed this social aspect of Hindu society.

Banerjee writes that the Kanphata or the Nath Sect of the Yogis had no logical link with the medieval reformation. In his view the ideas of the Yogis and the teachings of Guru Nanak were fundamentally different, the latter's attitude towards them was critical. For Guru Nanak the path of true Yoga

43. A.C. Banerjee, *Op. cit.*, p. 212.

44. Cf. R.C. Majumdar, *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, pp. 81-5.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

46. A.C. Banerjee, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, Rajesh Publications, New Delhi, 1978, p. 43.

was found by dwelling in God while yet living in the midst of world's temptations.⁴⁷ Some historians like W.H Mcleod have tried to prove that in spite of Guru Nanak's sharp criticism of the Yogis, traces of their influence have been found in his teachings; in his composition. Guru Nanak has used terms such as '*Sahaj*' and '*anahad*' *sabad*. Banerjee writes that it is not quite clear that these words were used in exactly the same sense by the yogis as by the Gurus. Whether these words became the common property of different systems of religions thought. He states that in such cases the question of borrowing is more or less academic, in any case, but the borrowing of words does not necessarily indicate the borrowing of basic ideas.

A.C. Banerjee has also explained the contribution of the successors of Guru Nanak to the Sikh Panth from Guru Angad to Guru Gobind Singh. He has thrown light on the martyrdom of Guru Arjan and that of Guru Teg Bahadur. He writes that after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, the process of militarization of Sikhism began under the able leadership of *Guru Hargobind*⁴⁸. He has also explained Guru Gobind Singh's conflict with the Hill Rajas and the circumstances that were conducive for the creation of his Khalsa.

Another book by A.C. Banerjee was "*The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Religion*" which was published for the first time in 1983. In this book, he has tried to bring to the reader's notice the salient features of the lives and teachings of the ten Sikh Gurus. His principal object has been to trace the development of the Sikh society from its humble origin in the days of the founder of the faith to its full maturity under the tenth Guru. Significantly, the sociological and political factors which contributed directly and indirectly to the steady progress of Sikhism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have been given due consideration, but the crucial role played by religious devotion and zeal has never been overlooked.

Conclusively it is right to state that Sikhism and the Sikh history have interested the people of different religions outside the Punjab. Researches on the Sikh Panth often show a Punjab orientation. Sikh studies gradually broke fresh grounds in Bengal and steadily transcended the regional limits to attain a new height and respectability. The century long search for the Sikh history provided it with the necessary background. The Sikh past became an integral part of professional teaching and critical research, stimulating publication of significant research works on Sikh history and religion in English. Some of these are still read, translated and quoted in serious academic discussions.

47. Cf. W.H. Mcleod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, Oxford, 1968, p. 217.

48. A.C. Banerjee, *op.cit.* p.137.

GODDESS WORSHIP AS ASCRIBED TO GURU GOBIND SINGH : AN ANALYSIS

Kavita*

Goddess worship by Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs has been a subject of heated discussion among writers and historians. A serious treat on the subject notwithstanding, divergence of opinion is forthcoming on the issue. Of course, to say the last word in history is but an empty dream, still it seems to be a dire necessity to probe into the matter deeply on the basis of Guru Gobind Singh's concept and ideology as is evident from his precepts and practices in order to reach a cardinal point. Certain Sikh classics like *Gurbilases*, *Mehma Prakash*, *Sau Sakhi* etc. go a long way in holding that the Guru worshipped the Goddess.

The keynote of the vast literature produced by the Guru himself or his court poets is strong faith in the oneness of God. As a matter of fact, Guru Gobind Singh has provided us a good deal of material by way of his writings which prove beyond doubt that he was the worshiper of the *Akal Purkh*: God, the Almighty. Hence a critical review of the whole issue is a dire necessity.

Guru Gobind Singh holds:

There is one God, the true, the great, and the bounteous

*O Lord, who can tell all Thy names ? The wise call Thee by special
Names according to Thy deed¹*

In his *Akal Ustat*, as is quite evident from the title of the *bani*, the Guru praises the Immortal. He submits before Him only:

He is the primal Being, unseen, and immortal: His light is manifest in the fourteen worlds He is contained in the ant as in the elephant He is unequalled, unseen, eternal He is the searcher of all hearts

....

I bow to the one primal God²

At one place the Guru states:

Since I have embraced Thy feet,

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1. Guru Gobind Singh, *Dasam Granth*, Jap Sahib.

2. *Ibid.* *Akal Ustat*.

I have paid homage to none besides³
 At another place the Guru comments:
All have set up false religions
I verily believe that there is but one God⁴
 The Guru argues:
How can I perform austerities?
How can I turn my attention to thee?
O Lord and yet forsake domestic duties⁵
 Guru Gobind Singh's faith on God is unshakable
What availeth it to sit closing both eyes
meditating like a crane?
This world is lost, and the next also for
Those who go about bathing in the seven seas
....I speak Verily; hear me all ye people
They who love God have obtained Him⁶
... His form is endless and infrangible
His glory is peerless and dazzling⁷
....God has His own light. He cannot be moved by Incantations⁸
Thou, O God art in the water, thou art in the dry land
Thou art in the river, Thou art in the sea
....Thy name is repeated again and again. Thy name is fixed
In man's heart⁹

Guru Gobind Singh called a spade a spade in revealing the aim of his life in his compositions in the *Bachittar Natak*, the sole purpose for which God had sent him to this world. It was to spread *dharma* and to prevent people from doing evil deeds. In His own words, God directed the Guru thus:

I cherish you as My son and I have created
You to extend the panth. Go and spread the
Dharma and restrain people from senseless acts¹⁰

3. *Ibid.*, *Ramavtar*.

4. *Ibid.*, *Sawaiyas* (Quatrains).

5. *Ibid.*, *Krishanavtar*.

6. *Ibid.*, *Sawaiyas*.

7. *Ibid.*,

8. *Ibid.*,

9. *Ibid.*,

10. *Bachittar Natak*, pp. 51-52; Cf. M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion: Its Gurus Sacred Writings and Authors*, V, Oxford, 1909, p. 299.

The Guru categorically explained his aim:
*For this task have I come to this world,
 And the Divine Guru has sent me for
 the sake of Dharma, ordaining me to spread the
 faith everywhere and to subdue the evil doers.
 I make it evident to the holy men that
 I have taken birth for this purpose to
 promulgate dharma, to raise the holy,
 and to cast out the evil doers from their
 very roots.*¹¹

Guru Gobind Singh aimed at serving the cause of righteousness. In more specific terms he was to seek the blessings and protection of God, the Almighty for the protection of *dharma* enunciated by Guru Nanak. His own experience and the experience of his immediate predecessor suggested that there was a real danger of interference from outside. Therefore, his problem was to prepare his followers for meeting aggression from whichever quarter it might come. No doubt, initially, he had come into conflict with some of the Rajput chiefs in the Punjab hills, his conflict with the representatives of the Mughal Emperor was more serious and potentially more dangerous. For the solution of this problem the Guru created the *Khalsa* and resorted to the baptism of the sword¹². It is alleged that before the creation of the *Khalsa*, he thought of getting the blessings of the goddess, which episode is not endorsed by facts. The practices adopted by him and the ways and means preferred by him indicate that he adopted a unique method to work for the sake of treading upon the path of righteousness.

After a good deal of thinking, he decided to make the wearing of arms a religious duty for this disciples. This was one result of the institution of the *Khalsa*. The claims of conscience had to be defended, if necessary with the force of arms. The use of arms was not a new thing for the Guru because even before the institution of the *Khalsa* in the year 1699, he and his Sikhs had already made use of arms. It goes without saying that the injunction of the *Khalsa* has to be seen in connection with the Guru's conception of God¹³. At one place he addresses God as All Steel....

All-Steel, I am Thou slave

....

11. *Ibid.*, 54; Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 300-301.

12. G.S.Nayyar, *Sikh Polity and Political Institutions*, New Delhi, 1979, pp. 76-77.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

*The arrow and the bow are You;
The shield and the sword are You,
They all attain to salvation who worship you.*¹⁴

Guru Gobind Singh attributes might to God through the use of ordinary names of weapons. Of course, he is thinking of Divine might as the instrument of God. He justifies the use of physical force in the cause of righteousness.

Guru Gobind Singh's renowned prayer depicting the indisputable connection of virtue with the use of force is portrayed in an interesting manner:

*May this be your blessings on me
That I never swerve from good deeds*¹⁵

To say that Guru Gobind Singh worshiped the Goddess before the creation of the *Khalsa* or any other time prior to this is to misconceive the whole ideology of the Guru.

According to a version, great deal of efforts had been made to invoke the goddess but having met no success, Guru Gobind Singh was considered to have achieved this uphill task. In fact, by goddess the Sikhs took the implied meaning of 'Power'.

Gurmukhi sources written around second half of the 18th century delve on the worshiping of the goddess by Guru Gobind Singh but the fact remains that sources like *Bachittar Natak*, the autobiography of the Guru as well as Sainapat's *Sri Gur Sobha*, the writing of one of the poets of his court make no mention of this episode. Moreover, as has already been discussed, the attitude and writings of the Guru throw no such hint. *Bhagauti-di-var* inserted in the *Dasam Granth* cannot be taken to have been written in praise of the Durga because this power is regarded to have created Brahma Shiva Rama and Krishna. The goddess has not been named *Bhagauti* in the very tell-tale of Chandi. *Bhagauti* seems to have been taken to mean the power derived from the *Akal Purkh*—God, the Almighty. *Akal Purkh* has usually been addressed *Bhagauti*. Anyhow, the views of certain writers who have laboured hard under the prevailing impact on this issue are as follows:

Mehma Prakash (Poetry) authored by Sarup Das Bhalla in 1776 A.D. seems to be the first account which refers to the worship of goddess by Guru Gobind Singh. The author narrates that once a *sangat* or a congregation happened to come to the presence of the Guru from a far off place and expressed depression and disappointment met in the hands of the Turks on their way to Anandpur. They were robbed off their goods and having been

14. *Dasam Granth*, p. 717.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

hurt, remained helpless with the only alternative to lodge a report of this incident of their torture to the Guru. The Guru remained calm for sometime. After a prolonged thinking he thought of making the goddess appear for the solution of the problem. The Guru then proceeded towards the peaks of the mountains. The Pandits brought the necessary material for *homa* which was duly performed. The Pandits gave an argument that since they would not be able to face the dazzling appearance of the goddess and there was a possibility of their becoming unconscious, it would be in the fitness of things that they would make ready the material required for the purpose of *bhoga* for the goddess. Ultimately, the goddess appeared.

The author of *Mehma Prakash* makes no mention of the wise Pandits involved in this episode and simply narrates that on the appearance of the goddess, they fell spell-bound where as the Guru felt delighted to see the vision. The goddess was surrounded by a dazzling light and was equipped with eight weapons which were as bright as the sun itself. Offerings were made before the goddess who placed a *khanda* (double edged sword) in the sacred fire in the *kund* and disappeared. After the disappearance of the vision, the Guru made all the Pandits awake up; milk was poured in the sacred fire and the double edged weapon was taken out.¹⁶

Bhai Gurdas, the Second has very briefly and abruptly made a mention of this episode. He comments: '*Gur simer manai kalka khande ki vella*. The author of this *Var* however, talks about the martial activities of the followers of the Guru and the defeat of the Turks.¹⁷

Gurbilas Patshahi Dasvin authored by Bhai Sukha Singh in 1797 A.D. delves on the life and times of Guru Gobind Singh. He very much takes up the episode of the worshipping of the goddess by the Guru. But besides many other things, a point to be stressed here is that the *Gurbilas* was written after the lapse of ninety years after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh and the author himself admits that he had taken up this account from some heresay.¹⁸

According to the narration presented by Bhai Sukha Singh, the Guru felt like worshipping the goddess after he happened to come back one day from hunting the wild beasts. It has also been mentioned that the Guru spent approximately four years in the *havan kund*. The Pandit who assisted in the appearance of the goddess is named Pandit Datta Nand of Ujjain. The goddess

16. Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mehma Prakash* (Kavita), Patiala, 1970 (reprint); pp. 822-30.

17. Bhai Gurdas, the Second, *Var* 41 (compiled with the volume of *Vars* of Bhai Gurdas).

18. Bhai Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas Patshahi Dasvin*, Khalsa College, Amritsar, 8/27, 10/71, 10/235.

made her appearance after an earthquake. The goddess was wearing a rosary of heads (*Munk Maala*). Her hair was let loose and fire was coming out of her mouth. Her colour was dark and black. She had a sword in her left hand. She gave blessings to the Guru. The Guru in his own turn asked for a sword which was duly granted. She never asked for any offerings. The Guru himself offered nothing as the Pandit, according to Bhai Sukha Singh, had made a prophesy that the Guru would have to give the sacrifice of his four beloved sons by way of offerings. The goddess disappeared after giving her blessings.¹⁹

Another writing which favours the worshipping of goddess by Guru Gobind Singh is *Sau Sakhi* which is deemed a peculiar book in Punjabi. One of the causes of the importance attached to this writing during the British rule was that Guru Gobind Singh was considered to be its author. But some of the contents of the *Sau Sakhi* expressed therein make it clear that those are not in tune with the ideology and philosophy of the Sikh Gurus. For instance the *sakhi* of invoking the goddess and seeking her blessings for an uphill task seems to be a mere concoction.²⁰

According to Sikhism, God is formless and self-existent. *Gurbani* contemplates on God as supreme (*tun mera pita tun hain mera maata*); no other power or authority can be worshipped in Sikhism in segregation from this concept of God. Guru Gobind Singh himself considers God as *arup*, *akhand*, *abhed*. Bhagat Kabir whose compositions are honoured in the *Adi Granth* observes:

Aval Alha nur upaya Kudrat de sabh bande

Ek nur te sabh jag upjia kaun Male kaun mande

Quite contrary to the basic concept of Sikhism, *Sau Sakhi* inserts that it struck to the mind of Guru Gobind Singh to worship the goddess in order to make the *panth* flourish and be prestigious. The Guru is said to have extracted some drops of his blood with a knife and offered it to the goddess on her demand. The Guru is said to have taken a period of ten months in performing the *havan*.

Bhai Santokh Singh is quite clear in his writings. In his *Sri Gurpartap Suraj Granth* he aptly observes that Guru Gobind Singh's dearest and spiritual head was God and he adored him only. However, Bhai Santokh Singh seems to repeat almost the same account of *Mehma Prakash* regarding the issue under reference.²¹

19. *Ibid.*, 8/27.

20. *Gur Rattan Mal-Sau Sakhi* (ed. G.S.Nayyar), Patiala, 1985, Sakhi, 17.

21. Bhai Santokh Singh, *Sri Gur Partap Suraj Granth* (ed. Bhai Vir Singh), Amritsar, 1965, p. 5006.

It goes without saying that Guru Gobind Singh's writings more particularly *Bachittar Natak*, his autobiography leaves us in no doubt that Guru Gobind Singh was the true worshiper of *Akal Purakh* who directed him to extend the *panth*, spread *dharma* and restrain people from senseless acts. In his famous *chaupai*, the Guru clarifies his position in the context of his concept of God:

Javan kaal sabh lok sawara

Namskar hai tahe hamara

....

Ad ant eke avtara

Soi guru samjeho hamara.

NEGATION OF SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES AND CUSTOMS IN GURU NANAK'S BANI

Daljit Singh*

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was born at a time when not only the Punjab but the entire India was passing through a long period of diffusion and conflict in the cultural and religious fields due to the impact of an alien religion.¹ There had followed the evolution of various sects within Hinduism, and also the development of institutions by the various saints of northern India. But all these institutions along with their reformers instead of unifying the Hindu society had contributed to the rise of sectarian problem.² It was generally felt that day by day deteriorating condition of the Indian people and the increase of inhumanity in the society was in need of a holy man - saint or prophet-who could save the down-trodden in the society. Bhai Gurdas refers to the birth of Nanak, in the following words, indicating the overall deteriorating conditions of the society:

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਆ ਮਿਟੀ ਧੁੰਧੁ ਜਗਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਆ।
ਜਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਨਿਕਲਿਆ ਤਾਰੇ ਛਪੇ ਅਧੋਰ ਪਲੋਆ।³

Guru Nanak is a par-excellence prophet of humanity, an incomparable and bold thinker, a divine mystic, and a great poet-philosopher of true humanism. He sees the human in God, and God in humanity. He reveals that God is within man, and man is nothing without God. He shows man at the heart of existence and existence blended with the spirit of God. Life and existence, man and the universe, to him are not ideas, and religion is not transcendental absolutism.

The birth of Sikhism as a Universal Religion is a well marked and decisive episode in the evolution of religious consciousness. Like every other movement of the human spirit, Sikhism emerged as a fountain of New Faith from the dynamic personality of Guru Nanak, a prophet of singularly unique personality blended with charismatic and generousness of saints. Guru Nanak

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1. G.C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, New Delhi, 1960, p. 19; Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Allahabad, 1963, p. 48. D.S. Dhillon, *Sikhism : Origin and Development....*, New Delhi, 1988, p. 67.
2. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, Chandigarh 1969, p. 139.
3. Bhai Gurdas, *Varan*, Var 1, pauri 27, Amritsar, 1962.

conveyed his message of transfiguring man and transforming society in the universal language of religions, artistically adorned in music and poetry. Wherever he went he inspired people to accept the eternal truth revealed to him in his inborn knowledge and experiences.

Guru Nanak asked men of all countries, nationalities and religious cultures "to think universally, to consider themselves as elements of humanity as a whole", and it appears now that he tried to rise world consciousness, a thousand years ahead of his times. Wherever he went he widened the mental horizon of the people, enlarged their vision, softened their hearts, and deepened their spirituality. Travelling on foot, on horseback, or by boats and ships, Guru Nanak went to the inaccessible Himalayas, impenetratable and even hostile neighbouring countries, and tried to bring single-handed a true cosmic evolution.

The soul and spirit of Guru Nanak's message was to purify and enable the religious consciousness of humanity by infusing into it a new ethical spirit. He protested against the sensuous, impure, and fanatic conceptions of religion, and denounced the exaggerated importance attached to religious ceremonies and age old rites and rituals.

Guru Nanak has a unique place amongst the spiritual leaders, preceptors, reformers and saints of the *Bhakti* movement in Indian history. His teachings have universal appeal and they hold good for all ages. The impact of his teachings on the Indian society has been incredible. These teachings have greatly influenced the people of India in general and those of Punjab in particular. He did not confine his mission to this country alone. He travelled far and wide, in order to enlighten humanity as a whole and administered to it his message of love, peace, devotion to God, social justice, religious toleration and universal brotherhood. For Guru Nanak no country was foreign and no people alien.

At the age of thirty, Guru Nanak spent nearly twenty years visiting numerous places in and outside the Indian sub-continent. He saw shops, cities, markets and centres of pilgrimage. During his itineraries, the Guru came in contact with the religious beliefs and practices of his times. Through discussions and debates, he not only tested but also enriched his experience. The path which he discovered through long and deep searching, was offered to all who came in contact with him. Guru Nanak's enunciate teachings were later collected and preserved in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, the sacred book of the Sikhs.

The literature of the period is admitted the mirror of the way of life of that epoch. The *Bani* which is undoubtedly the poetry of realism is a mirror of Guru Nanak's contemporary society. Guru Nanak was a prolific writer and depicted contemporary life, giving his own solutions to most of

the social-ills, which were destroying the very fabric of the Indian society. There is no phase of human life and society for which Guru Nanak *Bani* does not furnish guidance. The *Bani* of Guru Nanak as eshrined in the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is rich in social references. His *Bani* is in 19 ragas and 958 *shabads*. Guru Nanak had a double purpose in his preachings—social and spiritual. His social views depicted his reaction to the times whereas the spiritual was the call of his own soul. He advocated a new social order as a reaction against the social condition and fought against the environments in which he was born and brought up. In the middle ages, a number of saints appeared in all parts of India, preaching non-dualistic theism. The followers came under the spell of their respective predecessors spirituality, but could not form a movement after them. On the other hand, Guru Nanak organized his *Sikhs* (followers) into a community and established a new religion.

Rituals and customs of the medieval society were interwoven. Ritual means the *Karma-Kanda* which formed the ritualistic portion of the religion. Custom means traditions or ceremonies. The ritualistic part of religion included a set of functions and ceremonies which might be grouped under what were called *sanskaras*.⁴ The ancient Hindu legislators had the good sense to give stability to the customs and regulations by associating with them many outward ceremonies which, by fixing them in the minds of the people, ensured their more faithful observance.⁵ The medieval Indian saints and the Sikh Gurus were against the superfluous rites and rituals.

Guru Nanak's *Bani* gives a clear picture of the contemporary disorder and decay which must have prompted him to preach about a new social order. His *Bani* outlines three distinct phases in man's life; childhood, youth and old age. The following hymn denotes.

“ਬਾਲ ਜੁਆਨੀ ਅਰੁ ਬਿਰਧ ਫੁਨਿ ਤੀਨਿ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਜਾਨਿ॥”⁶

The Hindus followed certain auspicious ceremonies from birth to death and these, became part and parcel of their socio-religious life. In fact, the *sanskaras* were religious purifactory rites and ceremonies for sanctifying the body, the mind, and the intellect of an individual, so that he might become a full-fledged member of the community.⁷ There were sixteen major ceremonies prescribed by the Hindu Law givers⁸ and all these were religiously motivated.

4. Swami Krishnananda, *A Short History of Religions and Philosophic thought in India*, Garhwal, U.P. 1973, pp. 151-55.

5. Abbe J.A. Dubois, *Hindus Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, Great Britain, 1959, p.46.

6. “Know man's life in three portions to be divided - Childhood, youth and age.” *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Slokas, M. 1, p. 1428; G.S. Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Eng. Trs., Vol. IV, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1985, p. 2851.

7. R.B. Pandey, *Hindu Samaskars : A Socio-Religious Study of the Hindu Sacraments*, Banaras 1969, p. 16.

8. P. Thomas, *The Hindu Religion, Customs and Manners*, Bombay, 1956, pp. 87-96.

The most important ceremonies were *Jatakarna* (birth ceremony), *Namakaran* (name giving ceremony) *Mundan* (hair-cutting ceremony), going to *pathshala* for the first time, wearing *janeu* (sacred thread) or *Upanayana* (initiation), *Vivaha* (marriage) and obituary rites. These ceremonies known as *Sanskaras* or sacraments were given religious importance and majority of the Hindus still observe them.

Guru Nanak's hymns reveal an awareness and description of these rites which in his own opinion were meaningless and extraneous. His attitude towards some of the prevalent customs and rituals can be seen and observed from his *Bani* which are an integral part of the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

The birth of a child was a very impressing scene for the medieval man. The birth of a child in the family was an occasion of rejoicing and an event of great importance. Various hymns in the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* represent the pleasure on the birth of a child. The following hymns prove the point:

“ਕੇਹਾ ਕੰਚਨੁ ਤੁਣੈ ਸਾਰੁ॥ ਅਗਨੀ ਗੰਢੁ ਪਾਏ ਲੋਹਾਰੁ॥
ਗੋਰੀ ਸੇਤੀ ਤੁਣੈ ਭਤਾਰੁ॥ ਪੁੰਤੀ ਗੰਢੁ ਪਵੈ ਸੰਸਾਰਿ॥”⁹

“ਮਾਇ ਬਾਪ ਕੋ ਬੇਟਾ ਨੀਕਾ ਸੁਰੇ ਚਤੁਰੁ ਜਵਾਈ॥
ਬਾਲ ਕੰਨਿਆ ਕੋ ਬਾਪੁ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਭਾਈ ਕੋ ਅਤਿ ਭਾਈ॥”¹⁰

The foreign travellers have noticed some strange customs connected with the birth of a child. “A woman was considered impure for a certain number of days after delivery and even during menstrual period”¹¹. During the period of *sutak* (impurity), the woman was not permitted to touch any vessel or to cook food in the kitchen. Even the very touch of a woman in *sutak* was supposed to defile all the cooked food, making it impure for consumption. At the expiry of impurity caused by birth, the house was washed and purified. The child and mother were bathed. Guru Nanak, who was a great religious and social reformer of the period, never approved the idea of impurity of a woman during the child-birth or her menstrual period. The

9. “Should brass, gold or iron be broken, The smith in fire fuses in together. Should the husband with wife have break of relations, Through progeny are their bonds forged again”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Majh, M. 1, p. 143; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. I, p. 294.
10. “To mother and father is the son valued; to the father-in-law the sensible son-in-law. To the young maiden is the father the loved relation; by the borther is the brother deeply loved”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Sorath, M. 1, p. 596; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1257.
11. Manucci, *Storia Do Mogor*, Eng. Trs. William Irvine Vol. III, Calcutta, 1966, p. 155; Alberuni's *India*, Eng. Trs. Edward C. Sachau, New Delhi, 2002, p. 564.

below noted hymn illustrates to it:

“ਜੇਕਰਿ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਮੰਨੀਐ ਸਭ ਤੈ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਹੋਇ॥
ਗੋਹੇ ਅਤੈ ਲਕੜੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਕੀੜਾ ਹੋਇ॥
ਜੇਤੇ ਦਾਣੇ ਅੰਨ ਕੇ ਜੀਆ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥
ਪਹਿਲਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਜੀਉ ਹੈ ਜਿਤੁ ਹਰਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਇ॥
ਸੂਤਕੁ ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਰਖੀਐ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਪਵੈ ਰਸੋਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਏਵ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਗਿਆਨ ਉਤਾਰੇ ਧੋਇ॥”¹²

All such impurities and pollutions have no scientific basis whatsoever. Guru Nanak goes on to add that the real impurities consist in greed, lying, lust and slander which defile the heart, tongue, eyes and ears respectively and lead a man to hell. Only those, who remember the name of God, know no impurities. The under mentioned exemplifies the points:

“ਮਨ ਕਾ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਹਵਾ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਕੂੜੁ॥
ਅਖੀ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਵੇਖਣਾ ਪਰਤਿਅ ਪਰਧਨ ਰੂਪੁ॥
ਕੰਨੀ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਕੰਨਿ ਪੈ ਲਾਇ ਤਬਾਰੀ ਖਾਹਿ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਹੰਸਾ ਆਦਮੀ ਬਧੇ ਜਮ ਪੁਰਿ ਜਾਹਿ॥
ਸਭੋ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਭਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਦੂਜੇ ਲਗੈ ਜਾਇ॥
ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ॥
ਖਾਣਾ ਪੀਣਾ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੈ ਦਿਤੋਨੁ ਰਿਜਕੁ ਸੰਭਾਹਿ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਤਿਨਾ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਨਾਹਿ॥”¹³

The education of a child started at an early age. An auspicious day was fixed for sending the child to a preceptor.¹⁴ At the age of seven Guru Nanak himself was sent to a *pandha*.¹⁵ Guru Nanak does not attach much importance

12. “Should sutak impurity be believed in, then know, such impurity occurs everywhere. Inside cowdung and wood are found worms. No single grain of cereals is without life in it. The first of living things is water, whereby is each object sustained. How may sutak impurity be believed when even in the kitchen it is occurring? Saith Nanak : The sutak impurity goes not thus - Enlightenment alone washes it off”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Asa, M. 1, p. 472; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. II, p. 1003.

13. “The mind’s sutak is avarice, the tongue’s falsehood; The eye’s sutak coveting others’ women folk’s beauty and others wealth. The ear’s sutak is listening to slander. Saith Nanak : By such practices selves of human beings caught, To Yama’s demesne in bonds are taken. All belief in sutak is illusion, that induces in man worship of other than God. Birth and death by Divine Ordinance occurs; By the Divine will beings come and go. Food and drink that the Lord to creation has granted, is all pure. Saith Nanak : Those that by the Master’s guidance have realization, by sutak are not affected”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Asa, M. 1, pp. 472-73; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. II, p. 1003.

14. R.B. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-09.

15. *Meharban Janam Sakhi*, p. 15, *Puratan Janam Sakhi*, p. 18; Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, pp. 45-46.

to the wordly education for it leads to ego and lust for money.¹⁶ A true *pandit* is he, who cherishes the Name (of God) and reaps the Essence of the Word through a pure mind.

Guru Nanak views, 'a truly educated (wise person) is he who weareth the necklace of the Lord's Name. The below cited hymns manifestly indicate:

“ਪਾਧਾ ਪੜਿਆ ਆਖੀਐ ਬਿਦਿਆ ਬਿਚਰੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਸੁਭਾਇ॥
ਬਿਦਿਆ ਸੋਧੈ ਤਤੁਲਹੈਰਾ ਮਨਾ ਮਲਿ ਵਲਾਇ॥
ਮਨਮੁਖ ਬਿਦਿਆ ਬਿਕ੍ਰਦਾ ਬਿਖੁ ਖਟੈ ਬਿਖੁ ਖਾਇ॥
ਮੂਰਖੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਚੀਨਈ ਸੁਝਬੁਝਨਹ ਕਾਇ॥
ਪਾਧਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖੀਐ ਚਾਟੜਿਆ ਮਤਿ ਦੇਇ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਸਮਾਲਹੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੰਗਰਹੁਲਾਹਾ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਇ॥
ਸਚੀ ਪਟੀ ਸਚ ਮਨਿ ਪੜੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਸਾਰੁ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋ ਪੜਿਆ ਸੋ ਪੰਡਿਤੁ ਬੀਨਾ ਜਿਸੁ ਰਾਮਨਾਮੁ ਗਲਿਹਾਰੁ॥”¹⁷

Mere reading of the Holy scriptures and performing daily rites would not lead a *pandit* (a teacher) to *moksha* or *mukti* (deliverance).¹⁸ The under mentioned hymn apparently alludes to it:

ਪੁਸਤਕ ਪਾਠ ਬਿਆਕਰਣ ਵਖਾਣੈ ਸੰਧਿਅ ਕਰਮ ਤਿਕਾਲ ਕਰੈ॥
ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕਹਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਰਾਮਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਉਰਝਿ ਮਰੈ॥”¹⁸

Regarding the school going ceremony the Muslim tradition was more precise. The *Bismillahkhani* or more properly the *Maktab* ceremony was performed when a boy was four years, four months and four days old.¹⁹ At an hour fixed in consultation with an astrologer, the child took his first lesson from the teacher. Usually in the seventh year, a Muslim child was circumcised (*sunat*) and the occasion was celebrated with great rejoicings and entertainments according to the means of a family.²⁰

16. *Puratan Jaman Sakhi*, pp. 1-5.

17. “Call a pedagogue truly learned only when his learning he contemplates in equanimity : Contemplates his learning, derives its essence and in the Name Divine is absorbed. The egoist sells his learning, earning poison and consuming it. The ignorant person contemplates not the holy world, Devoid totally of understanding. Call a pedagogue a God - directed devotee who to his pupils imparts wisdom. Contemplate the Name, the Name you garner : Thus in the world derive profit. Let true devotion of heart be the true writing-tablet; Study the essence of holy truth. Saith Nanak : He alone is learned, a scholar with vision who wears round his neck necklace of the Name Divine”. *Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Ramkali, M. 1, pp. 937-38; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. III, p. 1921.

18. “One may study scriptures, expound grammar, and thrice daily perform worship - Man ! Without devotion to the Master's Word comes not liberation; Without devotion to the Name Divine man Maya entangled, dies”. *Ibid*, Raga Bhairo M. 1, p. 1127; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. IV, pp. 2291-92.

19. K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, New Delhi, 1970, p. 178.

20. *Ibid.*, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Salok Kabir, p. 477.

After various ceremonies in early childhood the initiation (*Upanayana*) ceremony was carried out with sacred thread (*Janeu*). The investiture of the sacred thread was an important ritual in the life of a Hindu but it is surprising that no one before Guru Nanak commented upon the utter futility of it. This sacred thread ceremony was performed by a Brahmin. The boy was bathed and seated on a wooden stool, and the father sitting opposite him. The sacred fire was lit and the Brahmin recited the sacred verses. The sacred thread (*Janeu*) consisted of three white cotton threads each consisting of three finer threads interwoven into one. The thread was consecrated before girding the boy.²¹ When Guru Nanak attained the age of nine, his father Mehta Kalu was anxious and determined to initiate him with the sacred thread. But Guru Nanak did not attach any religious sanctity and importance to the traditional rites and rituals. He refused to wear it. Guru Nanak observed that men indulge in all manners of sins but to please the society, they put on the sacred threads, while in their hearts they know how corrupt their souls are. And when this cotton thread is broken, they replace it by another one. The thread has no influence on their actions or character. Guru Nanak had his own ideas about the sacred thread, a thread made of compassion, continence and truth. The following hymn distinctly refers to it:

“ਦਇਆ ਕਪਾਹ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸੂਤੁ ਜਤੁ ਗੰਢੀ ਸਤੁ ਵਟੁ॥
 ਏਹੁ ਜਨੇਊ ਜੀਅ ਕਾ ਹਈ ਤ ਪਾਡੇ ਘਤੁ॥
 ਨਾ ਏਹੁ ਤੁਟੈ ਨ ਮਲੁ ਲਗੈ ਨਾ ਏਹੁ ਜਲੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ॥
 ਧੰਨੁ ਸੁ ਮਾਣਸ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਜੋ ਗਲਿ ਚਲੇ ਪਾਇ॥”²²

In the Punjab during the medieval period, women suffered the most. Young girls were carried off by the members of the ruling class. The evil became so widely prevalent that the parents thought of saving their honour by adopting early marriages of their daughters. Thus female child marriage became a well established institution in the country. A premature liaison of a girl was a social odium and a grown up unmarried girl was a source of pain for the parents.²³ These factors seem to have contributed to the practice of the child marriage. The *khatris* were sensitive about the virginity of their women and they married their daughters too young. The approximate marriageable age was round about ten. Often the girls were married even

21. P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

22. “Make compassion the cotton, confinement the yarn; Continence the knot and purity the twist; Such is the true sacred thread of the self. Thou Brahmin-priest! put this on me shouldst thou have it. This thread neither snaps nor is soiled, Neither burnt nor lost. Saith Nanak : Blessed are the beings that around their neck put this”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Asa, M. 1, p. 471, G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. II, p. 999.

23. Warish Shah, *Heer Warish*, p. 181.

before they had attained puberty.²⁴ Guru Nanak used the word *lani Bali* (poor ignorant girl) for such brides who were married long before they could understand meaning, rights and duties of a married women.²⁵

Dowry system was rigorously observed in medieval India. It had become a matter of great hardship to the poor. The Sikh Gurus condemned the dowry system as mere show of one's ego and riches.

The condition of widow was very miserable in the society and the conditions were very hard to bear. Widow remarriage was permitted amongst the Muslims but the widows were given the status of second rate wife.²⁶ Amongst the Hindus, widow remarriage was generally not allowed during the medieval period²⁷ except in the lower classes. Though there are no direct references to widow remarriage or remarriage of a separated woman in Guru Nanak's *bani*, he did favour the idea of a widow remarriage and resettlement in an honourable family life. The under mentioned hymn refers to it:

“ਜਿਉ ਤਨੁ ਬਿਧਵਾ ਪਰ ਕਉ ਦੇਈ॥ ਕਾਮਿ ਦਾਮਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਪਰ ਵਸਿ ਸੇਈ॥
ਬਿਨੁ ਪਿਰ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਨ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਹੋਈ॥”²⁸

Prostitution was also considered to be a necessary social evil. It was though discouraged by some of the rulers, yet it became a social entertainment. There are various references to the prostitutes in the contemporary society. Due to bad predicament of the widows, this practice too was in vogue. As widow remarriage was not allowed, she had to adopt sometime prostitution because of bad conduct of the society towards her. Those who were in the habit of visiting the prostitutes did not care to realize the feelings of their wedded companions. Guru Nanak has portrayed in the following hymn the feeling of a young lady whose husband visits prostitutes.

“ਚੁੜਾ ਭੰਨ ਪਲੰਘ ਸਿਉ ਮੁੱਧੇ ਸਣੁ ਬਾਹੀ ਸੁਣ ਬਾਹਾ॥
ਏਤੇ ਵੇਸ ਕਰੇਦੀਏ ਮੁੱਧੇ ਸਹੁ ਰਾਤੇ ਅਵਰਾਹਾ॥”²⁹

Ceremonies related to death and cremation had special importance for the Hindus. Several hymns in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* give a good account of

24. *Ibid.*, p. 97; W. Foster, *Early Travels in India*, p. 221.

25. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Telang, M. 1, p. 722.

26. K.M. Ashraf, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 189; W.J. Wilkins, *Daily Life and Work in India*, London, 1888, p. 265. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Gauri, M. 1, p. 226, G. S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 456.

28. “The ego-directed are like a widow to a stranger surrendering her body; For lust and money, under another's sway she places herself: Without her own spouse no fulfillment will she find”.

29. “Woman! smash bangles against thy couch, thy armlets and thy arms - With all thy make-up to is Thy Lord to others attached”. *Ibid.*, Raga, Wadhans, M. 1, p. 557; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1180.

the mourning practices and ceremonies after the demise of one's nearest. Cremation or burning of the dead body was the most recognized mode of the corpse during this period.³⁰ Two other ways of disposing of the body were, one to throw it in the running stream; and second, to leave it for the animals to consume. We get detailed information from Gurbani regarding preparation of cremation. The following hymn refers to it:

“ਜਲਿ ਮਲਿ ਜਾਨੀ ਨਾਵਾਲਿਆ ਕਪੜਿ ਪਟਿ ਅੰਬਾਰੇ॥
ਵਾਜੇ ਵਜੇ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀਆ ਪੰਚ ਮੁਏ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਰੇ॥
ਜਾਨੀ ਵਿਛੁੰਨੜੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਰਣੁ ਭਇਆ ਧ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਜੀਵਣੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੇ॥
ਜੀਵਤੁ ਮਰੈ ਸੁ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਪਿਰ ਸਚੜੈ ਹੇਤਿ ਪਿਆਰੇ॥”³¹

People used to light the earthen lamp for several days after the death of near and dear in order to give light to the deceased to show him the way to heaven. Such practices were criticized; it was declared that ‘the remembrance of ‘His Name’ was the true lamp. Only such a lamp could show path (path to the departed soul) to heaven and could save him from the fear of Yama’. The following hymn refers to it:

“ਦੀਵਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਤੇਲੁ॥
ਉਨਿ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਓਹੁ ਸੋਖਿਆ ਚੁਕਾ ਜਮ ਸਿਉ ਮੇਲੁ॥”³²

During the ten or twelve days, the person who had kindled the pyre cooked some rice and milk and made an offering of the same.³³ A funeral feast entitled *Pitramedha* (*Sapinda Karma* or uniting the *Preta* with the *Pitras*) was also performed. Many Brahmans were fed, and offerings made. Then the soul of the deceased was said to have reached its heavenly abode.³⁴

For ten days (the exact number varying according to caste rules), the family and the house in which the death occurred was considered to be

30. K.M. Ashraf, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

31. “Then is the loved one bathed in water, and in silken sheets wrapped. Raised are sounds of holy texts; and the five nearest relatives are as dead with grief; Wailing, by separation of the loved one game. Dead Cursed by life in the world after this. One living life as though dead will alone be proved to have real love”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Wadhans, M. 1, p. 580; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1225.

32. “The Sole Name Divine is my lamp; therein is poured oil of suffering; As by the light of realization is this oil burnt, Lifted is encounter with Yama”. *Ibid.*, Raga Asa, M. 1, p. 358; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 764.

33. R.B. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 265-66.

“It is supposed to nourish the soul of deceased who is regarded as still living in a sense and the efforts of the survivors are to provide him with food and guide his footsteps to the paramount abode of the lead”.

34. A.K. Shrivastava, *Hindu Society in the Sixteenth Century*, New Delhi, 1981, p. 39.

ceremonially impure.³⁵ *Sutak* was condemned by the saints. Guru Nanak's *Bani* refers to it in the following words.

“ਸਭੋ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਭਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਦੂਜੇ ਲਗੇ ਜਾਇ॥
ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ॥”³⁶

The half yearly *Sharadha* was generally richer and more liberal than the usual monthly one. With the *Pind-dan* or the offering of rice ball or meal on the last day of the year, the heir's duties towards the dead were regarded as practically fulfilled. It was more efficacious if the ceremony was performed at Gaya.³⁷

In *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* there are various hymns which represent the criticism of these religious beliefs and practices. The following hymns refer to the uselessness of custom of *Sharadh*.

“ਪਿੰਡੁ ਪਤਲਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਕੇਸਉ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ॥
ਐਥੇ ਓਥੇ ਆਗੇ ਪਾਛੇ ਏਹੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਆਧਾਰੁ॥
ਗੰਗ ਬਨਾਰਸਿ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ ਨਾਵੈ ਆਤਮ ਰਾਉ॥
ਸਚਾ ਨਾਵਣੁ ਤਾਂ ਬੀਐ ਜਾਂ ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਲਾਗੈ ਭਾਉ॥
ਇਕ ਲੋਕੀ ਹੋਰੁ ਛਮਿਛਰੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣੁ ਵਟਿ ਪਿੰਡ ਖਾਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਬਖਸੀਸ ਕਾ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨਿਖੁਟਸਿ ਨਾਹਿ॥”³⁸

In the Hindu society, of all the Hindu rites, *Puja* had occurred most frequently in their all ceremonies, both public and private, in their temples and elsewhere. During this period, there were two types of worship i.e. 'internal worship' and 'external worship'. Internal worship, was a mental ritual of the adoration of God along with recitation of *mantras* i.e. Gayatri, Sandhya and mediation, etc. The external worship was based on a procedure of invoking God in an image, a diagram or any other suitable symbol for the purpose of adoration and contemplation.³⁹

35. P. Thomes, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

36. “All belief in *Sutak* is illusion, that induces in man worship of other than God. Birth and death by Divine Ordinance occurs; By the Divine will beings come and go”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Asa, M. 1, pp. 472; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. II, p. 1003.

37. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Eng. Trs. By Col. H.S. Jarrett, revised by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Vol. III, Calcutta, 1948, p. 356; Brijnath Sharma, *Social Life in Northern India*, Delhi, 1966, p. 258.

38. “Devotion to the holy Name Divine is my ritual sweets and feasting, And offering to God : In this life and the hereafter, now and in future, This alone is my prop. Your laudation to me is holy Ganga and Banaras Theirin my divine self takes dips: True bathing in engaging in devotion day and night lies. Some are the offerings to the gods; others to departed ancestors. These the Brahmins mould and consume. Saith Nanak : The offering of Divine grace inexhaustible remains”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Asa, M. 1, p. 358; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. II, p. 764

39. Abbe J.A. Dubois, *op. cit.*, p. 147; Swami Krishnananda, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-163.

In *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, there are hymns which represent the existence of the above said internal and external worship. The Sikh Gurus and the saints condemned all of them because they had become mere rituals. There were no limits to the follies of idolatry - worship of *Salagrama* stone and the plant *Tulsi*.⁴⁰ The following hymn refers to it:

“ਸਾਲ ਗ੍ਰਾਮ ਬਿਪ ਪੂਜਿ ਮਨਾਵਹੁ ਸੁਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਤੁਲਸੀ ਮਾਲਾ॥”⁴¹

Idolatry had become so powerful ritual that the saints had to denounce it strongly. The people considered only the idols as God and they had forgotten the true God. They had started committing sins in the name of idols. The following hymn refers to it:

“ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੂਲੇ ਭੂਲੇ ਅਖੁਟੀ ਜਾਹੀ॥
ਨਾਰਦਿ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਿ ਪੂਜ ਕਰਾਹੀ॥
ਅੰਧੇ ਗੁੰਗੇ ਅੰਧ ਅੰਧਾਰੁ॥
ਪਾਥਰੁ ਲੇ ਪੂਜਹਿ ਮੁਗਧ ਗਵਾਰ॥
ਚਿਹ ਜਾ ਆਪਿ ਛੁਬੇ ਤੁਮ ਕਹਾ ਤਰਣਹਾਰੁ॥”⁴²

The *Aarti* adoration of deity, was one of the characteristics of Hindu religious practices. It was performed for idols or deities.⁴³ During the *Aarti* sticks of incense, such as *dhupa* and *agarbatti* were burnt (incense offering). Lights from *ghee* (clarified butter) were lit and *Aarti* (circulation of light before and around image) was performed. The priest rang a bell in one hand and moved the lamp (*diya*) with the other. During all this he recited the *mantras* (Prayer or invocations) offering various services to the Almighty. When Guru Nanak witnessed the *Aarti* at the great temple at Puri and was probably moved by the beauty of it, he asked himself, what *Aarti* shall I offer my Lord? His own response is couched in the incomparably beautiful hymn that he sang at that time. The following hymn magnifies the point in an illustrious manner:

“ਗਗਨ ਮੈ ਥਾਲੁ ਰਵਿ ਚੰਦੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਨੇ ਤਾਰਿਕਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਜਨਕ ਮੋਤੀ।

40. Abbe J.A. Dubois, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

41. “Brahmin! the Shaligram stone do you worship as Lord, And wearing rosary of myrobalam beads as good actions”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Basantu, M. 1, p. 1170; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs., Vol. IV, p. 2370.

42. “Hindus basically are misguided, from the true path straying. Their worship is as guided by Narada. Blind, dumb, totally blind are they : These thoughtless, unintelligent people to stones offer worship. The stone that itself shall sink, how may it take you swim?”. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Bihagara, M. 1, p. 556; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs., Vol. II, p. 1177.

43. Abbe J.A. Dubois, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-49.

ਗੁਰੂ ਮਲਆਨਲੋ ਪਵਣੁ ਚਵਰੋ ਕਰੇ ਸਗਲ ਬਨਰਾਇ ਫੂਲੰਤ ਜੋਤੀ।
ਕੈਸੀ ਆਰਤੀ ਹੋਇ ਭਵ ਖੰਡਨਾ ਤੇਰੀ ਆਰਤੀ॥ ਅਨਹਤਾ ਸਬਦ ਵਾਜੰਤ ਭੇਰੀ।⁴⁴

Guru Nanak not only condemned all these rituals but also tried to lift the man of the moorings to which he was trapped in for centuries.

44. "Placed on the salver of heaven are the lamps sun and moon, With bright pearls of the constellations - Thy offering : Fragrant mountain breezes Thy incense, the wind Thy fan; The entire blossoming vegetation Thy flower - offerings. Wonderful is this arati, of the entire creation to Thee, Thou annuller of transmigration : The unstruck harmony Orchestrates Thy worship". *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, Raga Dhanasari, M. 1, p. 663; G.S. Talib, *op. cit.*, Eng. Trs. Vol. II, p. 1388.

MILITARY MEMOIRS OF COL. JAMES SKINNER : A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

*Rattan Amol Singh Sidhu**

The coming of the European adventurers from the various countries especially from the beginning of the 18th and 19th centuries in India proved to be a boon for the many Kings and other trivial Chiefs of that time. The rulers of various states employed them for improving the civil and military administration in their respective states. Mostly Indian rulers succeeded in their mission by employing these adventurers in their civil and military departments. These adventurers not only improved and developed the civil departments of the rulers but also had maintained the armies in better drill, discipline and arms.

So, the demand of the foreigners to employ in the civil, military and administrative departments of "the various rulers especially in India was more increased during the 18th century. In India, these European adventurers became more needy by the Chiefs because they wanted to make their administrative set-up especially the defence department more powerful and active in strength i.e. parallel to the administrative system of their contemporaries as well as the other countries of the world. On that occasion, according to Mr. Lall: "Most of the Chiefs had visions of aggrandizement, but many more were struggling merely to survive. Few had the military means of realising the power they hankered for what they needed, and a few actually got, were the services of foreign military adventurers to beef up their ill-trained and frequently disloyal levies. These men were professional soldiers who had little left to do in Europe after the Seven years war.... India was a land of golden opportunities where almost anyone could take his way into lucrative employment. ...Most adventurers were incredibly lucky in exploiting the credulous chiefs of Hindustan. They spread out to other parts of the country where the future of Indian states was in the melting pot. For them the dissolution of imperial authority was a heaven-sent opportunity. They were in great demand. Nowhere were their military skills more welcome..."¹

* Urban Estate, Patiala. (M. 98725-89457).

1. John Lall, *Begam Samru-Fading portrait in a Gilded Frame*, New Delhi, 1997, pp. 25-26.

In the second half of the 18th century, according to a writer: "India had broken up into a number of warring states. Many adventurous soldiers trained in European warfare and military discipline, including the British, joined the fray to make fortune. Some amassed fantastic wealth. ...While some of these military adventurers created armies, conquered kingdoms, overturned princes, and ruled provinces wielding much personal powers,..."² Moreover, Maj. R.L. Ambrose, an English adventurer in Jaswant Rao Holkar's service wrote (in the Tract entitled A letter on the present crisis of Affairs in India addressed to Edward Parry, Chairman of the Honourable Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company) as thus: "It is well known, to those conversant with the affairs of the East, that there are in that country many hundreds of thousands, soldiers by profession, who wander continually from service to service, from prince to prince, as the pressure of the moment requires their assistance and promises them employ... Born soldiers, without any other profession than that of arms, these men eagerly flock to the standard of any adventurer, however desperate his prospects, if he only possesses the summum bonum of their happiness. In the minds of these people no such sentiment as amor patriae is to be found, above affection for a few clods of earth or stumps of trees, merely from their having been imprinted on their recollection from the sportive period of infancy. The Indian is, in this point, a citizen of the world. It not infrequently happens that fathers, sons, and brothers embrace different service, and meet in battle array on the ensanguined plain against each other, perhaps unwittingly to fall by each other's hand."³

These adventurers were English, Irish, Dutch, French, Scottish, German and American, who fought for the highest bidder and had raised their own private armies during the services of various Chiefs in India. They can be divided into three categories from their native point of view e.g. English, non-English and American adventurers. These adventurers mostly employed in the different branches of the armies of Indian Chiefs e.g. employed in infantry, cavalry and artillery branches of the army. Moreover, these adventurers "lived by their guts, swords and wits. They assumed ranks of "Colonels" and "Generals" and changed their names as it suited their convenience... Most of them were of humble origin and came from the lower strata of the society. But there were some drawn from European royal families, English, ducal houses and the nobility and aristocracy which had fallen on evil days. There were about 4,000 to 5,000 such swaggering adventurers who held sway till

2. H.S. Bhatia (ed.), *Military History of British India (1607-1947)*, New Delhi, 1977, p. 117.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118, 143.

1803 when their tribe melted away and the supremacy of British arms left no room for them. ...These men were of easy virtue. Living in isolation, miles away from their homes, they married Indian women or kept them as their mistresses. They were touched by oriental splendour. Dressing like Nawabs with swords and scimitars, they took to the "Hookah", Palki and bottle. Arrack-a local-was popular and there was a common joke that only those "who were arrack-proof within and sun-proof without" survived in India ! They had large size Zenanas or harems within the four walls of their capacious bungalows."⁴

Regarding the policy of the recruiting of European adventurers (in Civil and Military departments) by the Indian rulers in the 18th and 19th centuries, a learned author also writes that "If there was a last challenge to British hegemony in the subcontinent, between 1783 (Treaty of Versailles) and 1803 (Capture of Delhi by Lord Lake) or 1849 (annexation of Punjab by the East Indian Company), it came not from the French, but from the Indians themselves who tried to modernize their states and, seeing the outstanding military superiority of the European armies, did modernize their armed forces on a scale unparalleled anywhere else in the world at that time, only emulated later by Mehemet Ali in Egypt in the 1820s and, still later, by the Ottoman Empire and Japan in the late nineteenth - early twentieth centuries. ...Technical help and military advisers came mainly from France. But the different policies of modernization decided and followed by Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan at Mysore, the Nizams of Hyderabad, the Marathas at Pune, the Nawabs of Awadh and ultimately Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab, with all their ups and downs, were their policy, financed out of their revenues."⁵

In the early of 19th century, regarding the position and condition of the Indian society as well as the foreigners society especially in the upper regions of India, Mr. Spear writes that "The gentlemen of the robe, for all their foibles,

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118, 143.

5. Jean-Marie Lafont, "European Companies, Merchants and The Coromandel Coast in The Late Eighteenth Century", a Review Article, Jr. of the Indian Historical Review, Vol. XXIX, Nos. 1-2 (January-July 2002), published ICHR, New Delhi, 2004, pp. 256-257.

In India, during the disturbed period especially in 18th and 19th centuries, regarding the employment of European adventurers, "The idea of appointing European officers to train Indian armies was an old one. As early as the seventeenth century European officers were greatly in demand in India as artillery experts. Balaji Baji Rao for the first time began the practice later popularised by Mahdhi Sindhia. With the appointment by the Peshwa, in the fifties of the eighteenth century, of Muzaffar Khan and Ibrahim Khan who had been trained by Bussy, began the history of the trained battalions under the Indian Chiftains, the most prominent Sindhia and Daulat Rao Sindhia. Ranjit Singh followed this tradition." Narendra Krishna Sinha, *Ranjit Singh*, Calcutta, 1951, p. 160.

had an independence of station and view which made them a valuable element in Anglo-Indian society; if the country - side was possibly the happier for their absence. English society was certainly the poorer.

On the fanks of the regular Delhi society have two other groups - the Anglo-Indians or Eurasians,⁶ and the Indian Christians. The subordinate Anglo-Indians Coalesced with the subordinate Europeans, as already mentioned, but there remained the aristocratic Anglo-Indian, the relic of the late wars. These men were of the most diverse origin; they were of French, German and Portuguese extraction as well as English. Some had settled in Delhi in Mughul times, as officers of the Emperor, like the Deremao family; some had come in as adventurers in the 'Time of Troubles' like the notorious Walter Reinhardt, the husband of Begam Samru, and some were men like James Skinner, who had served in Sindia's armies and flad to the British on the eve of the second Maratha war. Some of French race, like the Indian Bourbons, remained faithful and lived on in obscurity. Finally, there were British officers, like the Gardners and the Hearseys, who contracted marriages according to Muslim forms with ladies of high rank and settled down as Indian landed gentry."⁷

6. For these special terms See: Cedric Dover, *Anglo -Indians or Eurasians?*, Calcutta, 1929. During the British period called -Eurasians, "Half-Castes", "Mixed Blood", "Country-borns", "Mixed Races", "East Indian" etc. After an independent India called and Anglo-Indian"; Mr. Wilson, *The Domiciled European and Anglo-Indian race of India*, Bombay, 1926; Eurasian - of mixed European and Asiatic (esp. Indian) parentage (formerly called East Indian and more recently Anglo-Indian). Europe + Asia, or the Comp. Eurasian + - AN. Cimmerii or cimmerian - fabled to live beyond the ocean in perpetual darkness. C.T. Onions (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, New York, 1966, pp. 175, 330; *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. III, p. 217 & Vol. V, p. 439, (pre. by J.A. Simpson & E.S.C. Weiner), Oxford, 1991; Ernest Weekly, *An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, Vol. I, New York, 1967, p. 529.

7. Percival Spear, *A History of Delhi under the Later Mughuls*, reprint: New Delhi, 2003, p. 143; See also: Rattan Amol Singh Sidhu, *The European Military adventurers in India with special Reference to Col. James Skinner*, CB, Nabha, 2002.

Among these adventurers, a number of them were mostly deserters from the various countries of the world. These were the following: e.g. an English and Anglo-Briton adventurers like Gardner, Dawes, Shephered, Ryan, J.H. Beliosis, Armstrong, Smith, Ambrose, Dodd; Vickers and James Skinner (a Eurasian adventurer, known as "Sikander Sahib" was the son of a Scott and a Rajputani; founder of the 'Skinner's Horse'); Non-English adventurers like Col. Michael Filoze, Col. Louis Bourquien known as Looee Sahib - a Frenchman, Col. George Hessing - a Dutchman, Gen. Claude Martine - a Frenchman, Gen. George Thomas - an Irishman, Col. Piron (often mis-spelt Perron) - a native of Alsace, Gen. Francois De Raymond (Michael Joachim Marie Raymond) - born at Serignac in Gascony), Col. Saleur - a French officer, Gen. Walter Reinhardt, and Maj. Sangster - a Scotchman; among the Americans i.e. Josiah Harlan, J.P. Boyd and James Murray etc. There were also European ladies adventurers from many countrues i.e. first lady adventurers (in about 16th century) from Portuguese, from England and France etc. Moreover, 'The oldest recorded English grave in India is of John Middenhall, merchant, adventurer and self-styled ambassador to the Mughal Court at Ajmer in 1612'. H.S. Bhatia (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 143.

Thus, the status of these adventurers became respectable and brighten as flickering lights among the peoples of India. They did many yeoman's services which positively effects the political, social and economic condition of India. Many of them proved their honesty, ability and bravery etc. in the services of many Indian Chiefs. They left their memories and marks information of an able civil and military administration, memoirable battles, as the founder of many cities in their names, as builders, as religious secularism and as an excellent reformers of social and economic set-up etc. in India. Many of them were known through their writing i.e. memoirs, autobiographies, contemporary historians and also many valuable historic records and events parallelly mentioned of that time.

So, one of these adventurers was named as James Skinner, Anglo-Indian, who wrote his own memoirs⁸ in Persian i.e. 'Military Memoirs of Lieut. Col. James Skinner, C.B.' which were later translated and edited by his friend, J. Baillie Fraser (who took this manuscript from Hercules, a son of Col. James Skinner, Captain in the service of HH. the Nizam of Hyderabad), in two volumes that first published in 1856. But, afterwards, 'Military Memoirs' were produced as in form of a single book (with some additions) by the efforts of Lt. Col. M.A.R. Skinner, a Great-Great-grandson of Lt. Col. James Skinner (1778-1841), C.B., in 1955 (printed at Mussoorie). Thus, here is a full analysis of the 'military memoirs of Col. James Skinner, C.B' :-

Col. James Skinner's Military Memoirs (hereafter cited as 'MM'), in two volumes, which later on published in a single book not only depicts the social and political events of the most stirred states of India especially in Northern-Western regions but also mentions a brief history of the Skinner's family alongwith many remarkable characters like Gen. De Boigne, Gen. Samru, Gen. Person, Gen. George Thomas (of Hansi), Gen. Martine, contemporary Maratha rulers - Rajput, Muslim and Sikh rulers, the Britishers etc. and also a famous female personality of that time i.e. Begam Samru.

The 'MM' also mentioned about the historic activities of "The noble and gallant leaders of the British forces in those exciting times... shall we find victories more splendid in all their details, or more important in their consequences than those of Assaye, or Argaom of Dehlee, or Lassawarrie, or of Deeg? Or where more desperate and dazzling deeds of valour than the storms of Gawilghur, of Ahmednugur, of Alleeghur, of Rampoorah, of Deeg,

8. James Skinner wrote Persian more easily than English; he is perhaps the only Eurasian officer who has written his memoirs in Persian language.

and many others? Or the far less known and less brilliant, but not the less remarkable or less gallant defence of Dehlee?"⁹

It is also written about the 'MM' that "In truth, Skinner, being far more a man of the sword than of the pen, was very ill qualified to furnish materials for a life. He could tell his story most graphically, but he could not write it; and had the many friends who have heard him narrate the striking incidents of his life, and describe the remarkable scenes of which he had been a witness, thought of nothing down such communications at the time, no doubt they would have served to form a far more interesting narrative than the present."¹⁰ Moreover, in the book, 'MM', Mr. J.B. Fraser, Esq., has mentioned about the character of Col. James Skinner i.e. "such as he was in truth, a gallant soldier, a zealous officer, a steady friend, a worthy noble-minded man; and in spite of his dark complexion, a true and loyal Briton."¹¹

Part one of the 'MM' has ten chapters which represents the history from the rise of Marathas to the establishment of the British Empire. The historic events and other incidents which happened in India are mentioned in these chapters as following descriptions:

In this introducing chapter, the 'MM' mentions about the foreign conquerors in India like Mahmood Ghiznavi, Alexander the Great, Ahmed Shah Abdali and Nadir Shah. Then, the geographical position and division of India, caste system, an account of the Marathas mostly based on the work of Mr. Grant Duff, a political resident at Satara. In the time of the origin power of Marathas, the 'MM' mentioned: "In common with all other provinces of India, this country was overrun by the Mahomedans, in their various invasions; but its chiefs and inhabitants cherished on unceasing spirit of hatred and aversion to their conquerors, which on all suitable occasions broke out into open revolt. The first of their chiefs, however, who appears to have maintained a hostile attitude with effect for any considerable time, was Shahjee, father of the celebrated Sivajee, who may be regarded as the true founder of the Mahratta power."¹² It also narrates the history of Shivaji's time and after, Peshwa's activities and their revenue administration, and also the detailed invasions of Ahmed Shah Abdali, a Afghan Chief, on the Indian soil, especially with the

9. 'MM', preface - pp. IV-V. The pronunciation and spelling of the names of places and personalities mention in this 'MM' are in old English style. i.e. archaic form.

See Appendix D. The contemporary names of the places and personalities are written in modern accepted spellings.

10. *Ibid.*, Preface-VI.

11. *Ibid.*, Preface-IX.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 3 of Part I.

Marathas. Besides, the memoirs represent the political events of Delhi, Oudh, Rohilkhand, Malwa, Bundhelkhand and the some regions of Indian peninsula etc.

The memoirs mention about the military force of Mewar what, at that time, "depending, as in all feudal governments, upon the goodwill of the powerful lords - here called Thakoors - who were more or less ready as their prince was powerful and the cause popular;... The Scindias, like all Rajepoots, are brave and trustworthy, but in neither of these respects are they to be compared to the Rhattores."¹³ After it, 'MM' tells about the Marwar, its geographical position, political and military power in the region of Rajputana. It comprises the famous territories of Jodhpur, Negore, Mertha and Palee. Similarly, it describes the political and military territories of other popular Rajputana states like Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Dhunder, Bikaner, Amber, Kota-Bundi etc. But, the military power of these chiefs described by the 'MM' based mostly on the Col. Tod's works i.e. Lt. Col. James Tod's 'Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan of the central and western Rajpoot States (volumes).

In the last of Chapter, the 'MM' mentions about the appearance of the English, as merchants, who later built a fort at Madras. Their expansion of power, step by step, in India has also been described. The 'MM' interestingly mentions that on that occasion the British forces "had been frequently forced to defend themselves by sea against their European rivals, they never were at variance with the natives until the war which broke out with France in 1744. This war soon extended to India, and the native powers were not long of becoming parties to the struggle between the rival European nations in the south. ...In doing this, many discovered their true bent, and became first-rate officers and leaders - the men to whom Britain owes the foundation of that vast empire which she now enjoys in the East-whose names are engraven in the hearts of their countrymen, as they are written on the page of history-men whom we talk of as we do of Wolf, or of Abercromby, or of Nelson, among the heroes of the western Hemisphere."¹⁴ Then in India, the British had to face with the French forces who had earlier came from the Franc and established in some Southern states of India. Now, at this stage, regarding the birth i.e. coming of European (military as well as Naval) adventurers in India from the various foreign countries, the 'MM' also narrates a valuable information to the readers i.e. "the exigencies of the time, and more especially the desperate struggle between the French and English troops in the Carnatic,

13. *Ibid.*, p. 25 of Part I.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35 of Part I.

gave birth to a class of adventurers less fortunate than these just mentioned, in the numerous aspirants for employment of European birth, who flocked to either army, hoping to carve out their way to fame or fortune by the sword. Of these many fell; and others, failing, and disgusted with the ill success of their countrymen, left them to try their luck in the service of native princes. These chiefs, convinced by painful experience of the great value of military organization and discipline, and believing that if they could but introduce such discipline amongst their own troops, they should secure the advantages, which had given success to the Europeans willingly entertained such adventurers, or even deserters, from the French or English troops; and placing under them bodies of native soldiers, expected them to be disciplined, and rendered equal, at all events, to the Sepoys of these powers."¹⁵

In Chapter II, a detailed life sketch of Gen. De Boigne, a European adventurer, is described along with his services and battles with the various rulers like the Mughals, Rajputs, Marathas and also his quit the service from the Sindhia's army. He also served the Jaipur's army at the time of Raja Pratap Singh. In the chapter, it is mentioned that Ghulam Qadir Rohilla came to Delhi, committed much atrocities and then digging out the eyes of King Shah Alam II. The 'MM' mentions regarding the blood and horrible scenes which were created by Ghulam Qadir and for which (in the memoirs) Qadir named with few words such as monster, insane, cruel, madness and a treacherous. Later on, he was captured and in a very horribly manner killed by the Marathas.

The 'MM' mentions that after serving the armies of various rulers, De Boigne made Lucknow, a Nawab's city, his abode by the advice of his friend, Gen. Claude Martine. On that occasion, he had increased his own regular troops by employing the Rajputs, Mahomedans and Ghosians etc. The 'MM' describes the complete history of his regular corps. It is mentioned about his corps: "In a few months the corps was complete. Ten of the battalions were

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36 of Part I.

Regarding the status and position of these adventurers, the 'MM' describes: "Of these, many were highly respectable by birth, as well as education and character, and well deserved the rank and fortune to which several of them attained; while others, of originally low origin, and deficient in those qualities which are requisite for success, sank head off, or became degraded and despised for their vices.

In the first class of these soliders of fortune we may mention, amongst others, the names of De Boigne, Raymond, Martine, Perron, Dudermaig, Hessing, Thomas, and, though last, certainly not the least worthy, the subject of these memoirs - James Skinner...". *Ibid.*, p. 36 of part I.

dressed like the Sepoys, and armed, as they were, with musket and bayonet. The other three, composed of Afghans, wore a Persian uniform, and were armed with match-locks, to which the General added a bayonet. 500 Mewattees, irregular soldiers, intended for camp duty, and 500 Cavalry, with sixty pieces of cannon, completed the brigade, which formed in itself a little army of 12,000 men, under the colours of him who had created it - the White cross of Savoy."¹⁶ These corps took a part in many battles especially in the regions of Rajputana i.e. Patan, Merta and Laswarie and so on. He also remained in the service of Daulat Rao Sindhia i.e. 2nd time in the Maratha service. Then, in the year of 1796, he bade adieu to India and before it, he sold his whole property and his personal army equipment to G.G. in Calcutta. About his character,- his contemporary officer who served with him named Capt. J. Smith writes that "De Boigne is formed by nature to guide and to command. His school acquirements are not much above mediocrity; but he is a tolerable Latin scholar, and reads, and writes and speaks French, Italian, Persian, Hindostance, and English, fluently. He is an attentive Observer of the manners and dispositions of men, affable and good humoured, but resolute and firm-he has entire command over his passions... - he is at once dreaded and idolized. Latterly the very name of De Boigne Conveyed more terror than the thunder of his cannon,... In person he is above six feet high, large limbed, giant-boned, strong featured, and with piercing eyes."¹⁷ After his departure from India, Col. Perron (later on Gen.), a French adventurer in the Navy, came to India and initially joined the forces of Rana of Gohad, and later on, joined the service of Daulat Rao Sindhia, a Maratha Chief of Gwalior. According to 'MM' : "Of Mr. Perron, Mr. De Boigne always entertained a high opinion, and spoke of him with great respect. But in several matters of politics, his opinions differed widely from De Boigne's, for he entertained as strong a dislike to the British as the General did a partiality; and, instead of following up the sentiment of De Boigne, of "never to quarrel with the English", Perron made no secret of his disposition to thwart and oppose them in every possible way... a policy which in the end proved fatal to his master as well as to himself."¹⁸

The next all chapters upto tenth chapter mention about the whole 'MM of Lt. Col. James Skinner' i.e. in the part I of the Book. Col. Skinner narrates in his own memoirs about the contemporary events of that time as like

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60 of Part I.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75 of Part I.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79 of Part I.

regarding the Maratha, Mughal and Rajput troops etc; About himself (from p. 105 of Part I of 'MM') e.g. his own birth, character, education and his own army i.e. Skinner's Horse, his services in Bundelkhand and other regions etc., his services in the Sindhia's army and about the skirmishes and character of the Rajput army of Jaipur; events in the Maratha court and about the joining the Maratha service of his brother, Robert Skinner; his (James) injuries with the battle of Raja Uniara; battle with Lakwa Dada, his defeat and death; Gen. Perron's service in the Maratha army and his battles with other chiefs; Gen. George Thomas's¹⁹ services in the army of Begam Samru and his battles with other chiefs, his battle of Hansi and Georgegarh with the Marathas, his character and death; Skinner's service with Gen. Perron; then his service with the British with other contemporary events of that time; his description about Gen. Samru and his services with the various chiefs e.g. Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-dowlah and the Jats etc.; about Begam Samru, her character and the other chief events of her time; Skinner against the Sikhs under the service of Lord Lake and his glorious success [But his (James Skinner) in his own words begin from p.105 of this 'MM'].

There are six chapters (XI to XVI) of the 'MM' of James Skinner in part two of the book. These chapters mostly deal with the activities and some achievements of Col. James Skinner with other contemporary forces of India. His achievements remain brilliantly successful during his British service till his death. In these chapters, he mentions about the following events i.e. the Maratha wars with Holkar and also with Tonk ruler; the British treaties; later on his success in the wars at various battle-fields against the Holkar's forces; his forces i.e. Skinner's forces took part in these battles for which Lord Lake thanked their services later on; also mentions the British policies against the various Chiefs of Indian states like Tonk, Maratha and Rajputana states etc; receives many decorations and gifts during the British service;

19. For George Thomas's history, see sources: William Francklin, *Military Memoirs of George Thomas*, Calcutta, 1803; Lewis Ferdinand Smith, *Rise, Progress and Termination of the regular corps*, Calcutta, 1804; Pandit Daya Ram, *Shir-i-Shakar*, MSS. 651, (in Ganda Singh's Collection), (in Persian); Tehsildar Munshi Ghulam Nabi, *Tarikh-i-Jhajjar*, Jhajjar, 1866; R.B. Pt. Maharaja Kishan, *Tarikh-i-Zila-i-Rohtak*, Lahore, 1884; Rai Brij Narain Verma, *Phul Namah...*, Lahore, 1914; Amin Chand, *Report Bandobast Hissar, 1860-64*, Pb. Govt. nd.; Shiv Brat Lal, *Punjabi Surma*, Vol. II, Lahore, 1919; Frank Anthony, *Free-lance soliders...*, Bombay, 1919, Ganda Singh, *Sikh Itihas Bare*, (reprint), Amritsar, 1999.

meeting with Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore; mentions also his son's appointment in the Nizam's army. Then his religious activities, benevolent social services and secular character, alongwith his death and burial is also mentioned in this book. Mostly, his main resistance with the Maratha power and Tonk state is discussed in detail. (Some of his famous life's main events, important activities alongwith the historic events, famous contemporary eyewitness and achievements would be discussed briefly in his special biography ahead).

Thus, in this brilliant and an excellent glowing script of the 'MM', Col. James Skinner narrates his events of life in his own words as (his life sketch, in his own words i.e. his 'MM' will be described in a condensed form i.e. to make short and interesting to the readers):

In his 'MM', Col. James Skinner wrote: "I was born in 1778. My father was a native of Scotland, in the Company's service; My mother was a Rajepootnee, the daughter of a Zemindar of the Bojepoor Country, who was taken prisoner at the age of fourteen, in a war with Rajah Cheit Sing, I believe near Bejaghur in the Benares district. My father, then an ensign, into whose hands she fell, treated her with great Kindness, and she bore him six children- three girls and three boys. ...In the year 1790, my poor mother died. She could not endure that her two daughters should be forced from her and sent to school. ... Robert (younger brother) and myself were sent to a charity - school, as my father, being still but a lieutenant, could not afford to pay board for us. In 1794, my father having obtained the rank of Captain, we were removed to a boarding-school, and I believe he could then afford to pay thirty rupees a month for each of us. In the beginning of 1796, I was bound apprentice for seven years to a printer, and was sent to the office to learn the business."²⁰ After learning the printer business, he met Col. Burn who was his friend and godfather and through whom, later on, he joined the Maratha service as an ensign on "150 rupees per month and sent me (Skinner) to the 2nd brigade at Muttra, then commanded by Colonel Sutherland, a Scotchman. By him I (Skinner) was posted to a Nujeeff battalion of matchlocks, under command of Captain Pholman."²¹ So, his first appointment was at Mathura where he was received by Jaggu Bapu, a Maratha Commander, in February 1797. He narrates about the activities of Maratha army and the historic events happening in the Northern-Western regions of India.

20. (Col. James Skinner's three sisters were married to gentlemen in the company's service and his brother, David went to sea; and his younger brother, Robert followed his example) *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106 of Part I.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 108 of Part I.

The Maratha Chief, Mahadji Sindhia died and later on succeeded by his adopted son, Daulat Rao Sindhia, in 1797. He mentions the battles of Marathas with Rajputs i.e. at Chitorgarh near Udaipur. Here he told about George Thomas, an Irish Naval adventurer, during the battle of Chitorgarh. He wrote: "We remained this for a month; troops pouring in on either side from various quarters: amongst them, George Thomas, a soldier of fortune, who at this time had six battalions and twenty guns, hired himself to Ambajee for a salary of 30,000 or 40,000 rupees per month. ... plundering became general, insomuch that, instead of fighting, parties from both sides were daily sent out to plunder the Rajpoot Country; and the Consequence was, that, in the course of month, every village for fifty cos around was burned and deserted the Rajpoots of Ryots taking shelter in their large forts."²² After this battle, Lakwa Dada was appointed a Commander-in-Chief of the Maratha forces. During the battles of Rajputana, Skinner mentions that George Thomas had return to his capital, Hansi (in Haryana), which was given to him by Appa Khandi Rao. Then, Skinner left in Rajputana and remained busy in the battle of Shahpura against a rebel, Keshri Singh, who was against Zalim Singh, the Kota Raja's agent (Karinda). Skinner described the events and the victory of the fort in complete detail in the pp. 132-138 of his 'MM'. Afterwards, in July 1797, Skinner came to Mathura and later towards Delhi with the Maratha forces. Then, he mentions about the clashes among the Marathas and the Rajput states due to the non-payment of the tribute to the Sindhia state, and also the clashes between Jodhpur state and its rival, Thakurs in 1798. In the same year, Gen. Perron took the control of Delhi Kingdom without any resistance and had appointed his own officers in the different departments of administration. Moreover, Col. James Skinner's brother, Robert, joined the Maratha forces in this year.

James Skinner narrates the political events of Punjab in the closing year of 1798. He mentions about the mutual rivalries among the Punjab Chiefs at that time and also the participate by Begem Samru of Sardhana in these rivalries. He also describes the skirmishes with Col. Hessian's brigade, under the forces of Sindhia, against the Holkar's forces. Skinner mentions about the rage and Cruelty of Jaswant Rao Holkar. The battle was fought near Ujjain, and after some casualties, Hessian paid some money (30,000 to 40,000 rupees) to get him out of Holkar (These events are mostly mentioned in Grant Duff's *Maratha History*).

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 124-125 of Part I.

In August 1799, he wrote about the expedition against the Matura Killadar, Abajee (Ackajee), but soon the fort was captured. Afterwards, he mentions his attacks in Rajputana territories where his brother (Robert) was wounded through the neck by a matchlock ball and later sent with other wounded soldiers to Agra. He won many forts in the regions of Rajputana.

In January 1800, he fought with the Raja of Uniara but before battle, he sent his spies in the camp of Raja to get all information about the Raja's military activities. The battle became very furious in which he along with his many officers and soldiers wounded. Many troops had been killed and James Skinner was also saved by a woman (of the lowest caste) who was an inhabitant of village near Tonk. His troops respected him much of his bravery. He narrates this whole event in his 'MM'. Then, there were peaceful negotiations with the Raja, and on 15th March 1800, he went to Bharatpur where he sent a thousand rupees as thanks to a woman who had helped him during the battle when he was wounded and also to whom he called as his mother. After the recovery from the wounds, he went to join the forces at Aligarh.

Then, he narrated the events of the skirmishes by the Raja of Datia and his Bundhela supporters against the Perron's forces where Perron won the battle and he became all in all of the Hindustan territories. Skinner mentions that Gen. Perron became very haughty, rusty and furious in behaviour with other persons, that is why, the Marathas and other people began to hate him. He also writes the events of Central India and extensively narrates the activities and victories of Jaswant Rao Holkar against the rivals near Poona and Rajputana regions.

He also writes about many European adventurers especially the rise and fall of George Thomas (1756-1802) who came to India in c.1781-82 AD and later on created his own independent state in the tract of Haryana with his Capital, Hansi in 1798. Skinner narrates mostly his (Thomas) life based on account of George Thomas's memoirs i.e. 'Military memoirs of Mr. George Thomas', (Calcutta 1803), written by William Francklin. After the fall of Gen. George Thomas against whom Col. Skinner himself fought (in the battles of Georgagarh and Hansi), he left the service of Marathas very soon and had joined the British service under the command of Lord Lake in January 1803.

In the British service, he was appointed to a charge of Irregular Horse and also took a part in number of battles especially against the Marathas in Delhi and other places. Then, Gen. Perron had to surrendered to Lord Lake at Aligarh. In the last Chapter (X) of part one, Skinner describes about the personalities of Walter Reinhardt alias Gen. Samru (1720-1778), a German

adventurer, and his wife, Begam Samru, a Queen of Sardhana.²³ Gen Samru, after joined the services of many Chiefs in India, and later deserted these Chiefs service(s) ultimately joined the King Shah Alam II's service under the Command of Najab Khan Zulficar-u-daulah, a high official of the King. Then, Gen. Samru got a Jagir of Sardhana (near Meerut) due to his best service and showing the bravery in the King's army. Then, after his death, his wife, Begam Samru, took the charge of his property. Regarding these personalities (Gen. Samru and his wife, Begam Samru), Skinner's 'MM' mention their life sketch mostly based on Scott's '*History of the Dekhon and of Bengal*'; Francklin's 'Shah Ahlum and George Thomas'; Seir Mutaquereen's 'history and also Asiatic Annual Register for 1800'.

In the same chapter, he narrates the battle against the Maratha Chief, Madhu Rao Falkia, who possessed a jagir in Malaghur in the Maratha territory, and also defeated him. In the years of 1803-1804, he also mentions and took a part in the number of battles at Agra, Laswarie and against the Sikh chiefs of north-west India. His skirmishes against the Sikhs on the banks of the Jamuna, opposite to Saharanpur, were all successful. In these actions, Col. Burn, his friend from many years, also joined with him against the Sikh rebels of that time. Later on, he received public thanks from the Delhi Chiefs, and also from Lord Lake received many thanks and presents for his perfect satisfaction [It is mentioned in a letter (refer in 'MM') of 2nd April 1804 from the office of Lord Lake].

Then, the second part of the 'MM' deals with his (James Skinner) narrations of Ist Maratha war till his death in December 4, 1841 at Hansi. (Mostly the important and famous eye-witness and narrations of the historical events in India (in part two) as mentioned by J. Skinner is given in condensed and skip form.)

In 1804, there was a skirmishes between the forces of Holkar who was also assisted by the Kota forces and the British. Skinner narrates that there

23. Some other sources of the Begam's life- see: Brajendranath Banerji, *Begam Samru*, Calcutta, 1925; Meerut (Vol. IV) and Moradabad (Vol. XVI) Dist. Gazees of U.P., Allahabad, 1904 & 1911 respectively; Tehsildar Munshi Ghulam Nabi, *Tarikh-i-Jhajjar*, (in Persian) Jhajjar, 1866; Montchoisy, L'Inde et les Hindous-Histoire de la Begum Sombre, (in French), Paris 1893; Rev. Fr. Christopher, Sardhana and its Begam, Agra, 1921; P. Thomas, *Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan: a general survey of the progress of Christianity in India from Apostolic times to the present day*, London, 1954; H.G. Keene, *A Sketch of the History of Hindustan, From the First Muslim Conquest to the fall of the Mughal Empire*, Delhi, 1972; William Dalrymple, *City of Djinns- A year in Delhi*, London, 1994, p.113 (James Fraser wrote in his diary on 24 August 1815: Begam Samru's music band was most accomplished alongwith very fair nautch girls in Delhi at that time).

was a skirmishes of both forces at Biana and Khushalgarh near Agra. In September 1804, Holkar, with 60,000 horse, 15,000 infantry and 192 guns, advanced rapidly to Mathura but in 1st October, Lord Lake soon driven back his forces.²⁴ Afterwards, Holkar sent his troops to capture Delhi but he could not succeed in his mission due to tough resistance of the British forces. Skinner mentions about this battle (near Delhi) in detail in his 'MM'. He describes the gallant bravery of Lt. John Rose (later Maj. Gen. Sir John Rose, KCB), Col. Ochterlony and Col. Burn. He also narrates the events of the battle of Deeg in detail where the Yellow Coats of 'Skinner's Horse' also took a part in this battle as well as in the battles of Fatehpur and Mainpore in 13th December, 1804 upto the last week of April 1805. The result was the retreat of Holkar to his territories and the victory of Lord Lake.

The next Chapter (XII) deals with Skinner's account of Col. Monson's (a British officer) expedition against the Holkar's forces near Mukandra pass as well as Bhampura in the Malwa territories of Central India. Even Skinner also mentions about the cruelties of the Marathas against the captured British troops. Then he mentions about the assistance (to the British) of the Banjaras near Hatras in form of food and animals etc. In December 1805, he alongwith his brother, Robert, fought the long battles with the Holkar forces at Shamli, Deeg, Bharatpur and near the territories of Aligarh and Delhi.

He mostly be victorious in many battles though he lost many of his troops. Lord Lake also thanked him for his victories and later he increased his own corps, and went to Rajputana where he alongwith his brother, Robert, took a part against the rebels of Kamuna near Chitor.

The next Chapter (XIII) deals with the rise of Ameer Khan, a freebooter of Rohilkhand, his agreement and his military expeditions with the support of various chiefs especially with Holkar against the forces of the British. His character as well as his army's position has been also discussed in the 'MM'. The clash of the Khan's forces with James Skinner alongwith his brother, Robert, in the regions of Bareilly, Afzalgarh and Moradabad also mentioned in the memoirs. In these skirmishes, Skinner 'brother's became victories in 1806. Then, he narrates the negotiations with Holkar and review the Holkar's troops. He also review the troops of Ranjit Singh of Lahore as well as the other Sikh Chief's forces near the territories of Karnal. In these actions, James Skinner (with his brother) utilized the Banjara forces well alongwith his force against the various chiefs and rebels of Northern-Western regions, Central India and Rajasthan.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 15 of Part II [Hereafter refer (with P & PP.) part II till the end of 'MM'.]

In XIVth Chapter, he narrates the policy of the British Government regarding the administration as well as military set-up in India. In the middle of the year 1806, the economy of the British Government became effected and irregularised due to the rapid growth of predatory bands, general anarchy and confusion, and the rise of rebel forces in India especially in Central Indian territories. In the 'MM' wrote: "Meantime, peace and economy being the order of the day, curtailment of expenditure and reduction of the military followed of course, and among the rest, Skinner's remaining corps of 1,200 horse, though guaranteed as permanent by Lord Lake, was ordered to be paid off. This very unpleasant order was communicated to poor Skinner by his lordship himself..."²⁵ But, later on, with the satisfaction of the services of the Skinner brothers, Lord Lake "then consulted a while aside with Colonel Malcolm, and turing to me (Skinner) asked if 20,000 rupees a year would satisfy both of us? I (Skinner) immediately thanked him, and said he was making pri: ces of us. He laughed, and then appointed jagheers of 5,000 rupees a year a piece to four of my rissaldars, pensioned all the officers as low as duffehdars (Commanders of ten), gave three month's pay as gratuity to the rest of the corps, and placed all the wounded men upon the Hauper establishment. I then took my leave with a letter to the collector of Coel for my jaghire..."²⁶ The letters of John Malcolm, a officer of Lord Lake, written in June 1806, supports the recommendation of Jagirs and other economy support to the Skinner brothers by Lord Lake.

In 1808, he was near the territories of Delhi and put in Civil service. Then there were several letters of his senior officers regarding the settlement of his army as well as services and the loyalties to the British as mentioned in 'MM'. Next he wrote about the Pindaries, a freebooter class, lived especially in Centre India. He mentioned the events regarding the battles and negotiations (from 1811 to 1817 and also upto 1819) with the Pindaries especially Chitu, a freebooter Pindari leader, who alongwith other Pindaries was perished, destructed and eliminated by the forces of Holkar as well as the British. The activities of Jaswant Rao Holkar and his death as imbecile madman (1811) are given in this 'MM'. Mostly this chapter was written which based its history and events mentioned by other contemporary as well as other sources of some writers e.g. J. Grant Duff's "*History of the Mahrattas*"; Prinsep's "*History of the Pindarree War*"; Sir John Malcolm's "*Central India*", Vol-I etc.

In the next Chapter (XV), many letters mentioned about the political position of Indian Chiefs; meetings, negotiations and settlement with Ameer

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

Khan, a freebooter of Tonk, and the other Chiefs of various states like Jaipur, Bharatpur and Alwar etc. The letters also show about the Jagirs (in 1818) and many valuable gifts which were granted by the Marathas and the British to the Skinner brothers as well as their friends for rendering their services to their masters. His brother, Maj Robert Skinner, died in 1821 and his corps were taken by another officer, Col. Baddely. From 1822 to 1824, he fought and repulsed many freefooter leaders (also Robbers and Tartar tribes called 'Cossacks' or 'Cazak's) in the Rajasthan territories.

In 1825, he took a part against the rebellion of Bharatpur in which his friend, Maj. Fraser, also played an important role to suppress the rebels. A letter (in January 1826) also shows the bravery of Maj. Fraser who assisted by the 1st and 2nd of Irregular Corps of Col. Skinner against the forces of Bharatpur, in which many officers and troops on both sides were killed and also injured. In spite of the good tactics of the Bharatpur troops the fort was ultimately captured by the British forces with stiff resistance. The 'MM' describes that later on there were the peace negotiations with the Bharatpur Chief, and memoirs also mention Alwar and Deeg events which happened later time but had settled in a short time. Then the Skinner's 1st Corps was reduced from 1000 to 800 troops by the orders of the British after solving the problems of Bharatpur, Alwar and Deeg.²⁷

The last chapter (XVI) of the 'MM' is very important regarding the personal achievements of Col. James Skinner from the British; meeting between Governor-General and Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore; Rajput events with other states also; his son's service; his religion, character and death. It is mentioned that the British made him CB (a little decoration) and also promoted Lt. Col. in H.M.'s service in 1830. The Governor-General (G.G.) presented him many gifts and had congratulation him through many letters. He even met the G.G. and his wife, Lady William Bentinck. Later on, he had to return to his estate, Hansi where some kozaks or plunderers had created a trouble near village, Broach, of Hansi by taking forcibly a herd of camels from the inhabitants. But, the rebellion was soon suppressed by a skirmish and the plunderers had to leave the territory of Hansi.

In his memoirs, Skinner then mentioned about the historic meeting of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore with Lord William Bentinck, on the banks of the Satluj river at Ropar in the last week of October 1831. At that time, he himself was present with his troops during the meeting. He even mentioned

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-190.

a detailed account and other events of the meeting between G.G. and Maharaja at Ropar. He wrote: "It was Lord William's wish to show the Sikh Chieftain a specimen of each branch of the British Indian army; and previous to his lordship leaving Simlah the under-mentioned troops were ordered to march to Rooper, the whole to be under the personal command of Brigadier-General Adams, Viz., two squadrons of his Majesty's 16th Lancers, his Majesty's 31st Foot, the 14th Native Infantry, a troop of Native Horse Artillery, and two rissallahs of my (Skinner) Corps, besides his lordship's body-guard."²⁸

Then, he also describes the detail historic activities of the beginning of the meeting in October 1831. He narrates the events in his 'MM': "We left Hansee on the 1st of October, and marched by Kurnaul to Rooper, which we reached on the 21st, and found General Adams already there, busily employed in clearing a large piece of ground for the encampment, in the front of which was a fine level parade, made to extend from the Camp to the bank of the river, and occupying a space of at least two square miles... This was the first time I (Skinner) had the honour of commanding British troops, as the General had ordered me to be placed on the roster of duty as a field-officer.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 210.

The object of this meeting was the British interest in Sindh at that time, but both the G.G. and the Maharaja's real motives were to steal a march upon Sindh as commercially and politically. So, the G.G. arranged this meeting of Ropar through Capt. Wade which finally took place in October 26, 1831. K.S. Narang and Dr. H.R. Gupta, *History of the Punjab, 1500-1858*, Delhi; 1969, pp. 306-307; Khushwant Singh, *Ranjit Singh, Maharaja of Punjab*, Bombay, 1973, pp. 166-177; See also; Capt. Murray book 'Ranjit Singh' where the whole 10th Chapter in detail which includes the meeting at Ropar, may be regarded as the composition of Mr. Henry Thoby Prinsep, the secretary to Govt., with the G.G. in India. Capt. Murray and Capt. Wade were the political agents at Ambala and Ludhiana respectively in the pre-middle of 19th century each wrote a narrative of the life of Ranjit Singh. The narrative of Capt. Murray was printed in 1834 and Mr. H.T. Prinsep put Mr. Murray's narratives in his book named : 'The Origin of the Sikh Power in Punjab, Calcutta, 1834. See other sources : Demetrious C. Boulger, *Lord William Bentinck, (Rulers of India Series)*, Oxford, pp. 56, 167-70; Henry T. Prinsep, *The Origin of the Sikh Power in Punjab*, Calcutta 1834, reprint Patiala, 1970, pp. 126-132; John Clark Marshman, *History of India from the earliest period to the close of Lord Dalhousie's administration Vol. III*, London, 1867, pp. 42-43; Robert Sewell, *The Analytical History of India, from the earliest times to the abolition of the Hon'ble East India Company in 1858*, London, 1870, p. 222; H.G. Keene, *History of India from the Earliest times to the Twentieth Century*, Vol. II, Edinburg, 1915, pp. 108-110; Sir Verney Lovett and Sir W. Meyer, *The Nations of Today-India*, London, 1923, p. 116; Baman Das Basu, *Rise of the Christian power in India*, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1931; Syad Muhammad Latif, *History of the Panjab*, reprint Ludhiana, 1994, pp. 451-55; Ganda Singh, *Sikh Itihas Bare (in punjabi)*, reprint Amritsar, 1999, pp. 85-89 (meeting with 4 conditions in this IInd agreement of 26th October 1831 i.e. just renew of 1st agreement at Amritsar's meeting in 25th April 1809); Bhagat Singh, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his times*, New Delhi, 1990, pp. 148-150, 456-457.

Preparations were likewise carried on upon the opposite bank of the river; and Runjeet's men had cleared a fine space and planted a garden, in the centre of which the royal tent was to be pitched. Wheat had been sown, too, in the shape of men, birds, horses, & C., in which forms it came up for the amusement of the chief, as well as to give vendure to this royal and magnificent encampment, as the place cleared out for the Maha Rajah's tent was under a barren rock, though on the bank of the river. A bridge of boats was likewise prepared by the Maha Rajah's people; and though the boats were very small, it was yet sufficiently strong to allow the royal sowarees, consisting of elehphants, horses, & C. to cross to and fro; nor did a single accident occur during the whole time of the meeting."²⁹ It depicts that before the meeting, the administrative set-up and the preparations of the arrangement of necessary equipments like beautification of the place, tents and the presence of elephants, horses and birds etc. put-up in a discipline way before the both powers at Ropar.

Afterwards, the both powers arrived in their own royal tents which were beautifully decorated and also there was a Hindu temple which had placed on a near hill. Skinner wrote: "On 25th of October, about eight A.M., his highness marched in, and the arrival was announced by a royal salute and discharge of 101 guns from the Maharajah's artillery... and his force was '16,000 horse, seven regiments of infantry, and twenty one guns'... I (Skinner) shall given an account of each day's occurrences."³⁰ It shows that before the final meeting, a counter-introduction of the Sardars and officers from both sides held. Prince Kharak Singh, a elder son of the Maharaja, was also present at Ropar and had also paid to G.G. a visit, and was received with a salute of seventeen guns. Then, Skinner narrates, from 27th to 29th October, the several meetings between G.G. and Maharaja Ranjit Singh alongwith Prince Kharak Singh, about 300 Sardars, army chiefs and also the meeting with about 100 young women (Well dressed and jewelled). They exchanged many valuable presents like jewels, turbans, horses and elephants etc. at that time. Both powers also inspected the military troops of each other. So, James Skinner draws the whole picture of the events and meetings of these powers in a common Durbar. He also describes about their costumes, cultural programme, beautiful tents, guns, Jewellery like pearls especially mentions about the famous diamond 'Koh-e-noor' which was in the possession of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Next he writes about the position and condition of the both forces. On 29th October, he narrates regarding the inspection of the British troops by the Maharaja and also the review of the Maharaja's troops especially the

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 210-211.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 212, 217.

Sikhs and some muslims by G.G. that they had passed before the royal Durbar. He wrote: "Their (the Maharaja's troops) firing, however, both in square and line, was very regular, and the men marched very steadily. They were all armed with muskets, and dressed like our sepoy's.

...The artillery were much inferior to ours; and all their movements were done at a walk. There was only a regiment of Cavalry, called "the Dragoons" brigade, with the infantry; ...They were dressed in red jackets and steel helmets and were armed with Carbines and pistols. Monsieur Allard,³¹

31. Gen. (Monsieur) Jean Francois Allard (1785- 1839) was a French military adventurer in the service of Maharaja Ranjit Singh from 1822 to 1830. Actually Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839) not only organised his army on the European lines but also he was a great military organiser who retained the best elements of military system from time to time. He also felt more necessity of the European adventurers to regularly trained, disciplined and equipped of his army. So, these European adventurers were initially recruited in the army as temporary (can be permanent afterwards) and on some conditions also i.e. some restrictions e.g. not to smoke, not to eat beef, to permit their beards to grow, not to offend against the Sikh religion, on circumstances to fight against their country; for officers: compulsory to attend Darbar and not to meddle on the state's affairs, to marry only with a local girl, and would remain loyal, faithful and honest in the Khalsa army etc. during their services.

On that occasion, there were more than fifty-five to sixty-five European (military as well as civil) adventurers in the service from the beginning of 19th century till the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. There were not fixed names and numbers of these adventurers as mentioned by different authors and other sources. Many adventurers were not bound to the Maharaja's service, that is why they were mostly free on the policy of come and go. Most of them were competent not only in the civil matters but also valiantly in the art of warfare like Game-cocks.

Thus, the group of these adventurers remained in the service of the Maharaja till his death and sometime afterwards (about five or six years). But, these adventurers were, later on, dismissed from the Lahore Darbar in the end of year 1844 in the time of Raja Hira Singh Dogra (1819-1844) by his adviser, Pt. Jalla (1804-44) (better known by the different subriquets i.e. Julla, Jallah, Jalha and Jullah. His real name was Pandit Jawala Sahai but some writers perhaps mentioned his name as Pt. Jagan Nath. Actually Pt. Jalla was his nick name. He was a Kashmiri 'Kaul' by Cast and remained as family priest (also a tantric preceptor) of the Jammu Rajas. Then, he became tutor to Raja Hira Singh Dogra, and later on as monitor, confident, staunch adviser and also financial Wazir. He also became a Deputy as well as Prime Minister of Raja Hira Singh in September 1843. He also got a title 'Mishar-i-Khas' and was called 'Jalla Missar'. He was a crafty, fanatic and ill-temper brahmin to whom some writers wrote 'doggerel' means 'There is God above and Jalla below; and may He smack Jalla on the Head with a Shoe. These adventurers were dismissed due to the anti-foreign policy and some various serious suspicious reasons framed by Pt. Jalla. It may be the conspiracy of Pt. Jalla as well as other anti-group of Chiefs and Sardars (who opposed these foreigner's appointments) to weak the Khalsa army after eliminating them.

under whose command they were, thinks them fully equal to our cavalry; but as far as I could see of them, I think them much inferior. The rest of the cavalry... the best of Runjeet's troops, and I think the only ones that would be useful in the field, though they are not disciplined. The whole of this body are Sikhs, good-looking men, and well mounted. They were dressed in yellow silk, and a great number wore armour. Some of these men who have distinguished themselves, receive, as Runjeet's own Bungars (Bargeers?) from 300 to 400 rupees per month."³² The above narration of Skinner shows about 'the strong and weak points i.e. superior and inferior formation of the Maharaja's army.

He further narrates that, from 29th to 30th October, there were many parades and acquaintance of various skills of the armed powers of both sides. Skinner writes that he came to know about the drill and discipline, uniforms, payments, arms and the firing power of various weapons of the Maharaja's forces. There were also various exhibitions like firing feats and the entertainment of many dances of the girls with different variety of wines for the royal guests. The Maharaja even made offer to the G.G. a horse name Loylee (Lali) but the latter declined the offer. Afterwards, on 1st November, the meeting was up and the camp broke up, and the G.G. went towards Ajmer, and Skinner to Delhi.

Regarding the Ropar meeting, Skinner mentions that every thing about the activities of both sides i.e. well-set arrangement, costumes, dresses, various entertainment, exchange of valuable prizes, show of drill and discipline of both forces, various feats, and other enjoyment equipments etc. He even came to know about which level the Maharaja's force skill, training and the quality of arms stands. But, he does not mention about the provisions of agreement, and how both side accept the agreement terms and also the main purpose of the meeting. Yes, he mentions about Captain Wade (an English resident at Ludhiana), a political agent of the British, who sat a little before Ranjit Singh, and acted as interpreter between him and the G.G., and later on the Maharaja permitted Capt. Wade, a lot of liberties and amenities that he virtually functioned as a British resident in a native state. Capt. Wade, later on, developed a network of agents and had indulged in many court intrigues and other espionage activities in the Maharaja territories.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 222-223.

After the Ropar meeting, the G.G. went to the Rajputana states where he met many Rajput Chiefs. Skinner also describes the position and condition of various Rajputana Chiefs. Then, he went to Ajmer where he met Lord Clare, the Governor of Bombay, who came with a letter of appreciation and a sword which was presented to Col. Skinner. Even, the G.G. also presented him a superb vase with an inscription on it and wrote a letter of thanks for his valuable services to the British. Then, many letters depict that he was not only recommended by a title, CB, but also got a brevet rank (probable Colonel) by the British Government. In the 'MM', he writes about the progress and development of his Corps and also has related his son's service in the Nizam's army. In some letters (mostly in 1832), the G.G. not only writes about Col. Skinner's valuable services (who also called by all as 'Sikander Sahib') as a brilliant military officer in various actions against the enemies and time to time rebels of the British Government but also mentions about his son, Hercules Skinner's appointment (who was educated in England since 7 or 8 years, and then came to India) in the Nizam's army i.e. one of the Corps of Irregular Horse. Hercules Skinner later on became Captain and highly respected officer in the forces of the Nizam of Hyderabad.³³

In Hansi, he developed his more territories and met many Zamindars to improve his administrative set-up by making a cordial relations with them. Many of his friends wrote about the positive character of his treatment with others. He even pensioned his horse who carried him through the Lord Lake's war(s). About his sober character, one of his friend wrote: "Of Skinner's humility and utter contempt of all assumption, I may mention one trait. When I was living with him, he always had an old spoon placed on his breakfast-table, to remind him, as he said, of his origin and early days."³⁴ Moreover, his another friend wrote: "Skinner... was a man of sincere piety, though one might have known him long without being aware of its extent, as he avoided all show. When I was with him at Hansee during the hot winds, we used to sleep in the Verandah, for the sake of coolness. Long before daylight in the morning. I used to hear him at his prayers, with most earnest utterance, half aloud, and he at all times expressed a feeling of deep gratitude to the Almighty for the worldly advantages that had fallen to his share, and an

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 236-239.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 241.

entire dependence on Him for the future".³⁵ The above statements indicate about his simplicity and a religious faith in God. In the battle of Uniara where he was mortally wounded, he then promised to build a Church after his recovery from the wounds. Later on, a Church (called St. James) was built at an expense of about two lakhs of rupees at Delhi. So, "Skinner as has already been said, was a truly good and pious man, and few were more deeply imbued with real Christian feeling and Charity".³⁶ Regarding his death, 'MM' relates that from 30th November, 1841, he got slight shivering fit and also followed the small attacks of fever and ague daily. On the 4th of December, he became more uneasy and also felt a sensible pain in the stomach and the gout blockage in the chest at that time. He also did not receive any relief from medicines. Skinner repeatedly exclaimed, he "did not know what was the matter with him." "Towards evening his pulse rank and his skin became cold... In less than an hour after, vomiting, which had at first been vainly encouraged, came on, but with it came a quivering spasm. His pulse ceased, and all was over."³⁷

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 241-242.

According to W. Dalrymple that 'Skinner had received a title from the Mogul Emperor: Nasir-ud-Dowlah Colonal James Skinner Bahadur Ghalib Jang. Nevertheless, Skinner was always known to Delhi-wallahs simply as Sikander Sahib: to the people of the Capital he was a reincarnation of Alexander the Great.... But skinner was more than some starchy military caricature: he was also an engaging companion, an entertaining conversationalist, a builder of churches, temples and mosques, and the host of some of the most magnificent nautches ever held in the Indian capital'. 'I have seldom met a man who on so short an acquaintance gained so much on the heart and goodwill as this man', wrote James Fraser soon after their first meeting in 1815. 'He has seen a great deal -and run many risks and consequently has much anecdote and many adventures to relate....' William Dalrymple, *op.cit.*, pp. 126-127; See also: Mildred Archer and Toby Falk, *India Revealed: The art and adventures of James and William Fraser 1801-35*, London, 1989; Mildred Archer, *Between battles: The Album of Colonal James Skinner*, London, 1982; T.G.P. Spear, *Delhi - Its Monuments and History*, New Delhi, 1995.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

Moreover, about his achievements and respective personality: Skinner also purched many properties for the enlargement of his estate. Then, he 'spent considerable sums on irrigation works, ... (Called) a good landlord, and was respected by the natives, who still say of him '*Wuh to badshah tha*' ('Ah! he was a King'). His swarthy complexion, habits of life, and early training were those of an Asiatic... Bishop Reginald Heber described him as 'a modest and good as well as a brave man'. Sir John Malcolm, his friend, wrote: 'as good an Englishman I knew'. George Smith, *The Dictionary of National Biography*, (ed. Sir Leslie Stephen & Sir Sidney Lee), Vol. XVIII, London, 1960, p.342.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 245-246.

So, he died at Hansi on 4th December 1841, and later on his body was disinterred, removed from Hansi and buried by the side of his friend, William Fraser in St. James Church on 19th January 1842.

William Fraser was his best friend who was killed by an assassin in 1835. It was his wish through a letter (of 29th November 1836, Delhi) that after his death, he should be also buried by the side of his friend, William Fraser. So, his wish was gratified by his son (Joseph) on the 17th January 1842, and an account of his burial was mentioned by his son (Joseph) in the 'MM'.³⁸ Thus, he was buried with full military honours alongwith his, "yellow boys" i.e. "the Skinner's Horse" in Delhi. It is mentioned in 'MM': "None of the emperors" said the native," were ever brought into Dehlee in such state as Secunder Sahib." And an eye-witness observed, that he never on any occasion saw such a crowd. Military honours were paid to the funeral by official command; and sixty-three minute guns were fired, denoting the years of the deceased. A funeral sermon was preached over the body, at which all the Europeans at Dehlee attended; and on the 19th of January, the Veteran soldier was committed to his final earthly resting-place, beneath the altar of the church he had built, and beside the friend he had best loved-placide quiescant."³⁹

Thus, the 'MM' is full of events, romance and mainly mentions the detailed life sketch of Col. James Skinner as well as other members of Skinner's family. It relates the political, social and some economic condition of Indian rulers of various states during the 18th and 19th centuries AD. It also mentions about the lives and character of various European adventurers like Gen. Boigne, Gen. Samru, Gen. George Thomas and Gen. Perron etc. alongwith their military activities in the services of various chiefs. Many events of the battles with native chiefs by the British have been narrated in detail by Col. James Skinner. In 'MM', mostly few historic events in it are also described from the various sources (i.e. from the books and Journals etc.) e.g. J. Grant Duff's, *'The History of the Mahrattas'*; Sir John Malcolm's *'Central India'*; Col. Tod's *'Annals...'*; Williams Francklin's *'Military Memoirs of Mr. George Thomas'*; Prinsep's *'History of Pindari war'*; an authentic account of contemporary letters to Col. Skinner etc. and also journals like *'Asiatic Researches'* Vols.'

So, in part I of 'MM', regarding the detail of events and information as follows: about Gen. De Boigne; Col. James Skinner's services and activities towards the various chiefs in India, political activities of the Maratha Chiefs

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 246-248.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 249.

and also Zaman Shah in North-West regions of India during the 18th Century; mentions about the services of Robert Skinner, a brother of Col. James Skinner; detail activities of Gen. Perron, and the interesting events of the life of Gen. George Thomas; the relation of the various chiefs with the British; Origin and military career of Gen. Walter Reinhardt alias Gen. Samru and his wife, Begam Samru; and also the Skinner's successful attacks against the Sikhs in North-West regions of India. But, his real memoirs begin from p. 105 of his 'MM' where he mentions about his memoirs regarding his birth, family, education and then his services with the various rulers of India. Upto Part I of 'MM', Skinner narrates mostly the activities of Gen. Samru and his wife, Begam Samru. Moreover he also mentions about his service in the British Government under Lord Lake (1803). In part II of 'MM', he narrates in detail the events of Rajputana; Origin of the Chiefs of Tonk; Jaswant Rao Holkar's activities and many battles etc. He also mention about the policies of the British, Marathas, Tonk estate and the Rajputs. Many letters of the British Govt. mentions regarding the Skinner brother's also (Robert) battles bravery, grant of Jagirs and their rewards etc. in the 'MM'. It also contains the rare photographs of many personalities as well as his corps i.e. 'Skinner's Horse'.

But, Skinner gave an interesting account in this 'MM' i.e. the meeting of Lord William Bentinck, G.G., and Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore in full detail is eye-witness of this meeting is very resourcesful and valuable in the 19th century history. The account of Maj. Fraser, his friend, and also the services of James Skinner's sons are described in this 'MM'. His character, his noble works e.g. as builder, secularity in various religions, help to poor and his military development (i.e. his corps called the 'Skinner's Horse') etc. all are fully mentioned in 'MM'. Lastly his Jagirs in various regions, his illness and death and his burial in St. James Church have been described in this 'MM'. So, in part I as well as in Part II of 'MM', the historic account and events (in detail) as mentioned i.e. of historic personalities of that time; social and political condition of India in 18th and 19th centuries; James Skinner's British relations, battles with many rebels like the Rajputs, the Sikhs, the Marathas and other powers by Col. James Skinner; the recruitment of the Banjaras (near Mathura and Agra) by Skinner; expeditions and other time to time campaigns against the Pindaris and in the Rohilkhand territories; Formation of the 'Skinner's Horse'; detail description of the meeting between the Governor-General and Maharaja Ranjit Singh; mentions about his brother and his sons; letters give description about the Skinner's jagirs, trophies, rewards, as a builder and also lastly his character and death.

Lastly, in spite of the narration of authentic accounts and contemporary historic (civil and military) events especially of 18th and 19th centuries in the

'MM', there are also reflections of the various drawbacks parallelly in the military memoirs of James Skinner e.g. some errors in dates and unsystematically refer the events of happenings i.e. biographies, political activities of the Chiefs and some battle episodes etc.; mostly the memoirs are not written in sequence or in perfect set; in many chapters, not date or month or the year of particular event(s), mentioned; many Indian names, places and cities are written in own English pronunciation style as the European people spoke and write; and even the character of James Skinner has been not described fully e.g. his love for festivals, his humility and financial help to the poor and needy people; his affection to the Justice; and not mentioned his books i.e. written in Persian name 'Kitab-i-Haqaiq-i-Rajgan', or Historical sketch of the Princes of India (1833); Tashrih-ul-Agawam, MS, 1825; Tazkirat-ul-Uma, (1830), MS, and a Persian inscription which was written by Col. James Skinner in the memory of his friend, William Fraser (d. 22nd March, 1835). In the 'MM', his proverbial hospitality; except his erection of St. James Church in Delhi as a gift of his landmark, his other benevolent services like the restoration work including the repair of the Jama Masjid and the Qutab Minar, upon which he placed a Chattri or Cupola of his own design, Fanny Parks mentioned him by name, and states that it was built upon the model of St. Paul's Cathedral. ...the dome was an imitation of a Muslim mosque, and a symptom of Skinner's fondness for Islam (Percival Spear, op.cit., p.149); and his other interests of life have not been mentioned. Moreover, his several marriages as well as his family life have not described in this 'MM'.

Hence, in spite of few typological drawbacks and some syntax dot errors of English language, the 'MM' mentions the valuable and an authentic account of the events and other happenings of that time (in the 18th and 19th centuries period) especially in the upper parts of India. The 'MM' also relates the political, social, economic as well as the parallel activities of the rulers and the peoples of that time. It is a good source for the historic set-up events to the records, and social and political conditions of that time. See also: "St. James Church - A Romantic History", 1836-2007 commemoration of the 171st Anniversary of Consecration of St. James Church, Kashmere Gate, Delhi. The overall get-up of the abridged volume of 'MM' is satisfactory and will also serve as a guide to those scholars and students who are interested in future research in political and military adventurers' history of India especially in the 18th and 19th centuries. In spite of the 'Color bar' in Colonial rule of India, 'MM' have some intense feelings of the up and down existing circumstances in the civil, political and military affairs of the ruling chiefs of that time in the Indian territories. The 'MM' also narrates the full description

of some famous personalities of that time, detail of events, battles and the web of political relations among the various Indian chiefs with the British (E.I.C.) and other foreign powers of that time. Moreover, in the 'MM', the authentic letters of that period by the various chiefs to Col. James Skinner and Vice Versa mention valuable source of events and history of that time.

Thus, the writer, in this work, mainly represents Col. James Skinner as a truthful, a steady friend, a worthy noble minded individual. He was a gallant soldier, true and loyal Briton but mentions his dark complexion and as a zealous officer during his time. Lastly, this 'MS' not only deals with the 'MM' of Col. James Skinner but in a nutshell life events of his brother, Maj. Robert Skinner and other personalities alongwith social, political and economic condition (position) of India as well as its rulers, also written by its author. ('MS' remained with Col. Skinner's friend, J.B. Fraser, Esq. who left India in November 1820. Then, this 'MS' was (later on completed by his brother, William Fraser, also a good and most intimate friend of Col. James Skinner, who was murdered in 1835).

GRIFFIN'S ACCOUNT OF PRINCELY STATES OF PUNJAB—A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

*Anju Suri Nee Anju Arora**

Born on 20 July 1838 at Watford, Lepel Henry Griffin successfully qualified Indian Civil Service (ICS) examination in 1859. He was appointed as Assistant Commissioner of the Punjab on 17 November 1860 and subsequently rose to the prominent position of the Chief Secretary. He continued to serve in the province till July 1879. Meanwhile in February 1875, during the mental incapacity of Raja Kharak Singh of Kapurthala State, the name of Lepel Griffin, the then Under-Secretary to the Punjab Government was suggested for acting as Superintendent of the State as he was deemed 'eminently qualified' for the office. His appointment accordingly was sanctioned by the Government of India on the recommendation of the Local Government. He was instructed to carry on the administration as far as possible in conformity with native laws and usages.¹

After assuming the charge of the State in the April 1875 he applied his energy and efforts in improving every branch of its administration, and the Lieutenant - Governor was highly impressed with 'the benefits of his superintendence.' In his enthusiasm for reforming the administration of the Kapurthala State, he foisted two European officers into the State service - one as Assistant Engineer and the other as Headmaster of the Randhir College. In August 1875 he submitted a proposal to the effect that one of the Kapurthala regiments be allowed to be encamped for a month every cold weather with the nearest English Brigade, and join in the field work and Brigade parades. Pointing to the advantages of this proposal, he remarked :

I cannot but believe the result would be good; other States would be anxious to follow the example, and the training afforded would make serviceable troops of the now half-disciplined forces of feudatory States, which should be an important part of the

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1. Government of India to the Punjab Government, dated 1 March 1875, Foreign Department, Secret, March 1875, No. 68, National Archives of India (hereafter NAI), New Delhi.

Imperial military strength, and accustomed to work with British troops, unless accepted by the Government, as an auxiliary force.²

When the matter was referred to Government of India for its consideration, C.U. Aitchison and F. Henry, the Secretary and the Under-Secretary respectively favoured the proposal strongly.³ The Commander-in-Chief, Lord Napier, however, opposed it on the ground that it would invite similar requests from the other States and cause inconvenience, and to refuse their requests would create jealousy and possible ill-feeling towards Kapurthala.⁴ On the whole, Griffin's administration in the State as the Superintendent was acclaimed as a 'marked success' till 1876. In November 1878, he was appointed as a permanent Chief Secretary of Punjab. Acknowledging his outstanding and remarkable services, the Supreme Government conferred upon him the title of C.S.I. in July 1879 and that of K.C.S.I. in May 1881. Though Lytton had all praise for him, his successor, Ripon punished him by sending him to Central India. Unwillingly he left Punjab to assume the new office and engaged himself there in reforming the Princely States of Gwalior, Indore, Bhopal, etc. He aspired to become Lieutenant - Governor of Punjab but he was greatly frustrated when his ambition could not be fulfilled. In January 1889, he sought retirement on medical grounds. After his retirement, he settled in England and evinced keen interest in literature and contemporary politics. On 9 March 1908, he breathed his last, leaving behind his wife and two sons.⁵

Griffin's principal work pertaining to the Princely States was *The Rajas of the Punjab* which was published from Lahore in 1870.⁶ This work gives a detailed and comprehensive account of the Princely States of Punjab including Patiala, Jind, Nabha, Bhadoor, Kapurthala, Faridkot and Mandi. However, the hill States of Punjab do not fall within the purview of this work as the author considered these States comparatively 'petty' and insignificant. After giving genealogies and early history of the said States, he discusses at length the

2. Foreign Department, Political A, May 1876, No. 224, N.A.I.

3. *Ibid.*, Nos. 223-227, pp. 1-2.

4. *Ibid.*, No. 226, para 2.

5. For further biographical details of Griffin, see *Dictionary of National Biography*, Supplement, Vol. I (20th century, 1901-1911), Reprint Oxford University Press, 1976, pp. 167-69.

6. Another work of Griffin entitled *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, later edition published in collaboration with C.F. Massy from Lahore in 1940, gives only a succinct account of the States and minor Chiefs of the Punjab from early 19th century till 1938.

main events of the reign of all the Rajas.⁷ He dilates upon the conquests and military exploits of the Chiefs, not ignoring their faults and failings. He gives lively comments about the character and conduct of the Chiefs. Some instances may be given here in this regard. About Raja Amar Singh of Patiala State he writes :

He was but a fine specimen of a barbarian - rude, courageous, impulsive, generous and ignorant. He had a quick intelligence and a strong arm and his success was well- deserved.⁸

Summing up the character of Raja Sarup Singh of Jind, he remarks :

In person and presence he was eminently princely, and the stalwart Sikh race could hardly show a taller or stronger man. Clad in armour, as he loved to be, at the head of his troops, there was perhaps no other Prince in India who bore himself so gallantly and looked so true a soldier. In character he was honest and just.⁹

About Raja Raghbir Singh of the same State he comments, "He is a man of excellent judgement and great honesty, and during the late minorities in Patiala and Nabha, his advice has always been good."¹⁰ Griffin is critical of the conduct of Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha and considers some other Chiefs in the Cis-Sutlej territory sailing in the same boat. The Nabha Raja in his dealings with neighbouring States "showed himself as unscrupulous and grasping as any other Chief. He was no worse than others, but, at this time, there was no single Chief in the Cis-Satlej territory who appeared to have any idea of right distinct from his own personal interest, and the consideration that his object could only be attained by violence or fraud, gave him no concern."¹¹ In making this remark Griffin has obviously given vent to his prejudice against the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs. He, however, is all praise for the character of Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, the founder of Kapurthala State.

7. Ala Singh, Amar Singh, Sahib Singh, Karam Singh, Narinder Singh and Mahinder Singh of Patiala State; Gajpat Singh, Bhag Singh, Fateh Singh, Sangat Singh, Sarup Singh and Raghbir Singh of Jind State; Hamir Singh, Jaswant Singh, Devinder Singh, Bharpur Singh and Hira Singh of Nabha State; Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Bhag Singh, Nihal Singh, Randhir Singh and Kharak Singh of Kapurthala State; Hamir Singh, Mohr Singh, Gulab Singh, Attar Singh, Pahar Singh and Wazir Singh of Faridkot State; Ajbar Sen, Chattar Sen, Sahib Sen, Narayan Singh, Suraj Sen, Shyam Sen, Gur Sen, Sidh Sen, Shamsher Sen, Isri Sen, Zalim Sen, Balbir Sen and Bijai Singh of Mandi State.

8. L.H. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, Lahore, 1870, Reprint Languages Department Punjab, 1970, pp. 51-52.

9. *Ibid.*, pp 374-75.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 379.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

According to him, he was, "an enlightened and liberal-minded man. He did not practice entire religious toleration, yet was far in advance of the majority of his countrymen."¹² Paying tribute to his liberality, Griffin writes that the city of Amritsar was in a great measure rebuilt and beautified by him.¹³ About another Chief of Kapurthala, named Fateh Singh, he observes, "He has a very fair reputation, and is looked up to by the disaffected as the fit person to be put at the head of a confederacy to throw off the yoke; but he is evidently not a revolutionist; he is mild and good-natured, seemingly simple, and undoubtedly wanting energy."¹⁴ Sardar Pahar Singh of Faridkot has also elicited favourable comments from Griffin regarding his character and administration :

The new Chief was a liberal-minded and able man, and immensely improved his territory more than doubling the revenue in twenty years. He founded many new villages, and the lightness of the assessment, and his reputation for justice and liberality, induced large number of cultivators to emigrate from Lahore and Patiala to his territory.¹⁵

Griffin has drawn pointed attention to the fact that some women who were close relatives of Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala played a highly significant role in the affairs of the State - Rani Rajinder Kaur of Phagwara (a first cousin of Late Raja Amar Singh), Rani Sahib Kaur, the sister of the ruling Raja and Rani Aus Kaur, the wife the Raja. Regarding the role of these women he observes:

Rani Rajinder was one of the most remarkable women of her age. She possessed all the virtues which men pretend are their own - courage, perseverance, and sagacity - without any mixture of the weakness which men attribute to women; and remembering her history and that of Ranis Sahib Kaur and Aus Kaur, who some years later, conducted, with so much ability, the affairs of the Patiala State, it would almost appear that the Phulkian Chiefs excluded, by direct enactment, all women from any share of power, from the suspicion that they were able to use it far more wisely than themselves.¹⁶

Griffin has also thrown light on the administration of various Chiefs.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 471.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 478-79.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 562.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

With some exceptions, he has generally presented a dark and dismal picture of their administration, particularly during the minority of a Chief. Referring to the minority of Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala, he writes :

For a child, surrounded by greedy and unscrupulous servants, who found their own profit in his weakness and inexperience, there could be little hope of a successful or happy reign... during his long minority, the general rule of practice is corruption of the grossest and most unblushing kind.¹⁷

Similarly Griffin comments that during the minority of Raja Sangat Singh of Jind, the affairs of the State, "fell into the utmost confusion; the territory was ill-managed, the people discontented... The mismanagement of Jhind continued to increase, and it became, perhaps, the worst of the ill-managed States on the border"¹⁸. In his account about the hill State of Mandi, Griffin describes the state of affairs in the State during the minority of Raja Bijai Sen (the son of Late Raja Balbir Sen) in these words :

the administration of Mandi had fallen into the confusion and disorganisation... The oppression committed by the Courts of Law was perhaps the worst of the grievances of which the people complained. So-called justice was only an engine for gratifying private revenge or avarice; the most severe punishments were inflicted for the most trifling offences; and women were publicly sold by order of Court, even for offences committed by their relatives.¹⁹

An ardent admirer of the British administration, and himself being associated prominently with the administration of the Punjab, he opines that the native rule in India in the former days prior to the British rule "signified oppression of most terrible kind, insecurity of life and property, luxury and debauchery in the Prince, misery and want in the people."²⁰ He, however, praises the administration of those States whose rulers had adopted the pattern of British administration. He remarks :

Many Native States in India at the present time are ruled well; and in the Punjab territories, Patiala, Jhind and Kapurthalla enjoy an administration as substantially just as that of the British provinces.²¹

Griffin traces British relations with the Princely States of Punjab in

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 61.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 322, 326.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 595-96.

20. *Ibid.*, preface, p. ix.

21. *Ibid.*, preface, p. x.

pretty details on the basis of authentic source material. He gives the contents of the Proclamation of 3 May 1809 by which the Cis-Sutlej Chiefs were taken under protection of East India Company against the 'authority and control' of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He cites instances which necessitated the British intervention in the internal affairs of the Chiefships. In 1811-12 when there was gross misgovernment in the Patiala State due to imbecility of Raja Sahib Singh, the British Political Agent, Ochterlony intervened and appointed Rani Aus Kaur as Regent and administrator of the State.²² Due to mismanagement in the Jind State under Raja Sangat Singh (1822-1834), a native official was sent by the British Government temporarily to conduct administration of the State.²³ The cases of British intervention were many in order to settle disputes pertaining to the succession matters in the States, as for example, to set aside the will of Raja Bhag Singh of Jind who had nominated his younger son, Pratap Singh as successor,²⁴ and to uphold the legitimate claim of Karam Singh of Patiala against Ajit Singh.²⁵

The British authorities also intervened authoritatively to decide the disputes among the Chiefs, and between the Chiefs and their feudatories, as they did in case of a prolonged dispute between Patiala and Nabha over the village Doladhi²⁶ and that between Raja of Nabha and the Sikh feudatories of Lidhran and Sonthi.²⁷ In 1829, the protected Chiefs were disallowed from accepting any jagir from the Maharaja of Lahore by the British authorities.²⁸

The Sikh Chiefs rendered services to their British Paramount from time to time when the latter was involved in wars, and Griffin has alluded to such services, as, for example, the Rajas of Kapurthala and Nabha offered their services to the British during the first Afghan War.²⁹ In the course of the two Anglo-Sikh Wars, the Chiefs of Patiala, Jind and Faridkot rendered all possible assistance to the British.³⁰ The loyalty of Kapurthala and Nabha during the first Anglo-Sikh War had been dubious.³¹ But during the second Anglo-Sikh War, Kapurthala proved its loyalty.³² In the course of the revolt of 1857-58,

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 124-38.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 326-27.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 309-22.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 155-57.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 157-60.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 392-96.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 324-25.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 394-396.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 184-87, 351-54, 564-65.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 496-502; 410-17.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 502.

the Maharaja of Patiala³³ and the Rajas of Jind,³⁴ Nabha,³⁵ Kapurthala³⁶ and Faridkot³⁷ rendered conspicuous services to the British for which they were liberally rewarded. Griffin has given a detailed account of such services and rewards. In regard to the services of Maharaja of Patiala, Griffin observes significantly :

During the disturbances of 1857-58, no prince in India showed greater loyalty or rendered more conspicuous service to the British Government than the Maharaja of Pattiala. He was the acknowledged head of the Sikhs, and his hesitation or disloyalty would have been attended with the most disastrous results, while his ability, character, and high position would have made him a most formidable leader against the Government.³⁸

While giving accounts of the Sikh Chiefships of the Punjab, Griffin has made some significant references to Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler of Lahore. Ranjit Singh, according to Griffin, "contrived to make a compact kingdom out of the Punjab proper, north of the Bias, but he did not unite the Sikh people under his rule. At the time of his greatest power, in 1830, there may have been 1,250,000 Sikhs in the whole Punjab but of these 500,000 lived to the south of Satlej under the rule of chiefs who looked upon Ranjit Singh as an upstart, and hated him even more than they feared him."³⁹ It should, however, not be forgotten that it was the greatest ambition of Ranjit Singh to unite all the Sikhs under his sway and to bring the Cis-Sutlej Sikh Chiefships under his suzerainty, but it were the British who prevented him from getting his ambition fulfilled. Griffin considers Ranjit Singh 'a favourable specimen of a Native State'. But he is critical of Ranjit Singh's revenue system which was 'an organised system of pillage'; "the country was farmed to contractors, who were bound to pay a certain sum into the State treasury, and were permitted to collect as much more as was possible for themselves."⁴⁰ Griffin has written a separate work on Ranjit Singh⁴¹ in which he discusses the achievements and character of the Maharaja in detail. He praises Ranjit

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 213-26.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 355-64.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 422-26.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 526-37.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 565-66.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 213-14.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

40. *Ibid.*, preface, p. ix.

41. See Griffin's book *Ranjit Singh*, Oxford, 1892, (Reprint) Delhi, 1957.

Singh for his courage, perseverance and political sagacity and remarks that he 'was a born ruler, with a natural genius of command'.⁴² He, however, attributes Ranjit Singh's religious tolerance to "indifference and selfishness than to any enlightened sentiment of a Sikh ruler."⁴³ This remark of Griffin, obviously, is unjustified and expresses his prejudices against a 'native ruler'.

Griffin is well informed about the social customs and traditions of the Sikhs. He particularly explains the custom of *chaddar dalna* (throwing the sheet), or *karewa* marriage which was universal among the Sikhs. The children of such marriages were often considered inferior in position to those of the regular marriage, contracted with a virgin, and with all the ceremonies customary among the Hindus. The most common, as well as the most highly respected form of *karewa*, was where a widow was taken to wife by her husband's brother. The marriage of a widow with the cousin of her husband was considered less reputable. Still less respectable were marriages with widows unconnected with the family, or women of strange clan and caste, which were considered altogether irregular, little better than concubinage, and the issue had no right to succeed to the property, real or personal, of the father.⁴⁴ Griffin has written a separate booklet on the laws of Sikh inheritance.⁴⁵ This work proved immensely helpful to the British in properly understanding the customs and traditions of the Sikhs.

The main merit of Griffin's work, *The Rajas of the Punjab* is that he gives a comprehensive and exhaustive account of all the aspects of the rule of the 'Native Chiefs'. He has not ignored even the minutest detail. Evidently he laboured hard to gather all the information from various sources which could be available to him. He not only depended on the British official records but also collected and compiled information on the basis of his personal interviews with the Chiefs and also from their private records. The author claims - and his claim is fully justified - that "no chapter of Indian history has ever been written so unreservedly or with so much detail as the present volume."⁴⁶ His account constitutes a complete history of the Sikh Chiefships of the region from their remote origin up to 1870. After going through his work the reader feels inclined to wish that this account should have been continued beyond

42. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

44. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, p. 29.

45. See *The Law Inheritance to Chiefships as observed by the Sikhs previous to the Annexation of the Punjab*, Lahore, 1869.

46. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, preface, p. vii.

1870 also. Indeed, no other work is available that could yield such a copious information as given by Griffin.

His account of British relations with the Princely States of the Punjab is particularly valuable. Being himself placed in high official positions including that of Chief Secretary in the Punjab, he had an easy access to all the documents and records pertaining to such relationship. He gives numerous footnotes about the correspondence that transpired between the officials concerned and also between the officials and the Chiefs. This imparts authority and authenticity to his account. Most of the writers who have written some accounts on the subject of these Princely States subsequently had inevitably to borrow most of the information from Griffin's work.

Griffin's work, all said and done, is predominantly motivated. He seeks to justify the British policy and sings glories of British imperialism. He writes in his prefatory note to *The Rajas of the Punjab* :

...the policy of the British Government, so far as the Sikh States are concerned, has been uniformly liberal, enlightened, and just; that in no single instance has it abused its strength to oppress its weaker neighbours; but that, on the contrary, it has taken less than its undoubted right, and has decided disputed questions with a generosity and disinterestedness which will be looked for in vain in the administration of any other country.⁴⁷

He also remarks that the "Government of India has had one policy, and one alone, whether the Punjab, or Oude, or Bengal, was concerned." In other words Griffin believes that the British career of conquests in India was absolutely clean and unblemished. He ignores the unscrupulous means which the British authorities had adopted, for example, in the annexation of Sindh, Punjab, Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur, Oudh etc.

Not only this, Griffin condemns all those British writers and historians who have criticised the British policy frankly and candidly, who "believed that the country was won by the most unjustifiable means, that each new province added to British India signified new crimes, and that the conquerors were only successful because they were unscrupulous."⁴⁸ Such Englishmen, according to him, "have neither the means nor the inclination to inform themselves of the truth... who either find it profitable to abuse their country,

47. *Ibid.*, preface, p. viii.

48. *Ibid.*, preface, p. vii.

or who are so unfortunate as to be able to find nothing but national shame and incapacity where others would find monuments of national energy and glory.”⁴⁹

As a matter of fact, such British historians are as well-informed as Griffin about the various aspects of British rule but they are not imperialist historians like him. On the other hand, they are more objective in their approach as historians who consider the quest of truth as the real aim of writing history. Obviously, Griffin was devoid of any historical vision. He wrote a detailed account of history of the Sikh Chieftains with twofold object of justifying the British imperialist policy and of ensuring the loyalty of the Sikh Chiefs towards the British Paramount. Nor is Griffin right in holding that the British policy in respect of Cis- Sutlej States was ‘uniformly liberal and generous’. He himself contradicts this remark when he gives a number of examples about the absorption of some territories of the Sikh Chiefship by the British in an unjust manner during the period of East India Company. After the death of Raja Sangat Singh of Jind, the British authorities recognized the claim of his successor Sarup Singh only to that portion of the Chiefship which had been the possession of Gajpat Singh; the remaining territories of the State comprising Ludhiana, Morinda, Basia, half share in Mudki and Jandiala were all annexed by the British Government.⁵⁰ In regard to the Patiala State, while settling the dispute over Hariana-Bhatiana boundary, the British authorities deprived the State of a portion of territories in an arbitrary manner.⁵¹ After the first Anglo-Sikh War, the British Government absorbed many petty Cis-Sutlej Sikh States which were considered guilty of having supported the enemies of the British and it not only confiscated portions of territories of Kapurthala and Nabha States for their supposed disloyal conduct to the British but also dethroned Raja Devinder Singh of Nabha.⁵²

A cool, close and candid perusal of the British policy in the post-1858 period reveals that the assurances given in Queen’s Proclamation, in which it was stated categorically that the British would respect the rights, dignity and honour of the Princes, were not honoured scrupulously. In the late 1860s, R.G. Taylor, Agent to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, was guilty of gross intervention in the affairs of Phulkian Chiefs. In 1870, therefore, the Supreme Government abolished the Political Agency for the three Phulkian

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 342-44.

51. *Ibid.*, pp. 163-73.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 410-17; 496-502.

States which came directly under the control of the Punjab Government and remained so from 1870 to 1900.⁵³ British intervention in the internal affairs of the States continued to increase, in the years to come, in violation of existing treaties, engagements and *sanads*. For example, the British intervened authoritatively in the so-called Kapurthala Will Case.⁵⁴

In spite of the aforesaid fallacies in Griffin's work, he has rendered appreciable service to the students and scholars involved in researches on the Princely States of the Punjab. He was an administrator historian like his two contemporaries, Sir Charles Aitchison and W.W. Hunter who have also produced vast historical literature on various aspects of British rule in India, but unlike them, Griffin concentrated on the Punjab and more especially on the Sikh Chiefships of the Punjab.

53. For details, see A.C. Arora's research paper, Assumption of Direct Political Control of the Phulkian States by the Punjab Government (1870), *Punjab History Conference Proceedings*, Sixth Session, March 1971, pp. 262-78.

54. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, pp. 504-26; for further details, see Anju Arora, *The Princely States: British Paramountcy and Internal Administration, 1858-1948, A Case Study of the Kapurthala State*, New Delhi, 2001, pp. 59-71.

MEO UPRISING IN 1857

*Aijaz Ahmad**

The Gurgaon District, a large part of which known as Mewat, formed a part of Delhi Division of North West Provinces of Bengal Presidency in 1857. This area of Mewat (Gurgaon, Alwar and Bharatpur Districts) witnessed a great and heroic achievement of its Meo population during the revolt of 1857. It was the first time in history when almost all the rural population of Mewat raised their banner of revolt against the British tyranny and tried to root out the foreign yoke from their homeland. They also faced barbaric and heinous cruelties by the so-called most civilized community of the world, which has no parallels in the freedom struggle of India.

The Meos, a brave and freedom-loving community were basically agriculturists. Since long they were living in the system of heavy taxation and exploitation by the British Government. They felt themselves enslaved on their own homeland and when they found opportunity of rebellion they jumped into it with men and money. Even before the rebellion, Meos opposed the British Government tooth and nail. In 1835 an unsuccessful effort of the Meos against the British Government, was a marvelous example. No doubt Nawab Shamsuddin Khan of Ferozepur Jhirka had a hand behind this incident but Karim Khan Meo and Alia Meo helped him in killing his British agent William Frazer. Charged for this conspiracy, Nawab Shamsuddin Khan and Karim Khan Meo were hanged after government trial. This incident left a far-reaching effect on whole of Mewat, which burst into rebellion with full force.¹

After beginning of the revolt from Meerut thereafter Delhi, around 300 revolutionaries (3rd light cavalry troopers), on 13th May 1857, attacked Gurgaon. At that time the Collector and District Magistrate of Gurgaon was William Ford. Ford with the assistance of some Pataudi *sawars* tried to overpower the revolutionaries near the village Bijwasan, 12 km away from Gurgaon, but he could not succeed because most of the Meos, Ahirs, and Jats sided with the revolutionaries. William Ford fled away to Mathura via Bhondsi, Palwal, and Hodal, leaving the Gurgaon District in a state of anarchy and at the mercy of

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1. Abdul Shakoor, *Tarikh-Meo-Kshatriya*, Delhi, 1979, p. 442.

revolutionaries. Booty of Rs.784000² came into the hands of revolutionaries along with the ammunitions. They killed 25 Britishers, burnt all the revenue records of the district administration and records of the Mahajans. They also attacked the jail and freed the prisoners and took the whole administration of the district in their own hands.³ Bahadurshah Zafar gave a stirring call to the countrymen to throw off the foreign yoke in 1857 and he himself became the symbol and focal point of hopes of the people of India. The Meo community responded positively and helped the 3rd Light Cavalry Troopers against William Ford. If we believe Shamsuddin Shams, the Meos, under the leadership of Ali Hasan Khan Mewati fought a fierce battle with Mr. Ford after the fall of Gurgaon from the British hand. This battle was fought near Ghasera village, situated between Sohna and Nuh. The Meos fought so valiantly that the British forces were totally routed and Ford had to flee for safety towards Mathura Cantt.⁴

On 21st May 1857, the Meos (leaders and chaudharies) of Punhana, Pinangwa, Hathin, Nagina, Nuh, Ferozpur Jhirka, Rupraka, Kama, Dig, Bharatpur, Dhausa, and Alwar held a Meo maha-panchayat and declared Bahadurshah Zafar as their leader in this war of independence.⁵ By the last week of May almost all the rural Mewat came under the rule of Emperor Bahadurshah Zafar. The chaudharies began to conduct the management of their villages and localities in accordance with the instruction of the Emperor.⁶ But the urban Mewat still owed its allegiance to the British through their native officials and wealthy persons. The gatherings of Mewatis attacked such towns. In this campaign of the Meo revolutionaries their leader was Saifuddin Meo, a farmer of Pindhua village. He targeted basically urban Khanzadas, Mahajans and government officials. The Meo revolutionaries did not meet any opposition from Taoru, Sohna, Ferozpur Jhirka, Punhana and Pinangwa and overpowered these towns and their administration.⁷ About Sohna, Punjab District Gazetteer says that the Meos, after attacking Sohna started loot and plunder like they did at other places.⁸ According

2. K.C.Yadav says that the revolutionaries looted Rs.78000 from the government treasury. (K.C.Yadav, *Haryana, Itihas Avam Sanskriti*, part-2, New Delhi, 1992, p. 105 (Hindi) (Hereafter cited as K.C.Yadav)

3. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1983, p. 60.

4. Shamsuddin Shams, *Meos of India*, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 31-32.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 30, see also *Amar Ujala*, 20th Nov. 2004.

6. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, p. 60.

7. Budh Prakash, *Glimpses of Haryana*, Kurukshetra, 1969, p. 24.

8. *Punjab District Gazetteer*, Vol, IV-A, Lahore, 1911, p. 24.

to *Tarikh-e-Meo Kshatriya*, Sohna had become a center of freedom fighters that comprised of Meos and Goojars.

Nuh town proved very tough for Ali Hasan Khan Mewati and his fellowmen because the local police and the Khanzadas,⁹ loyal to the British, gave a stiff battle to the Meos. But due to his numerical strength Ali Hasan Khan became victorious and Khanzadas suffered heavy casualties. They along with other loyalists and British troops completely rooted out by the Meo revolutionaries.¹⁰ The victory of Nuh town resulted in a complete withdrawal of the British administration from Mewat. The population of Mewat became happy to become independent and they celebrated by singing heroic songs. A portion of a song sung by the Mewati girls is given below:¹¹

*Kid jaiyo firangi ye biraj me su,
Chiriya chirangan sab marwaya,
Maro maro bar me su,
Kid jaiyo firangi ye biraj me su,*

(Oh Foreigners! where shall thee go from the land of Brij? Thou hast rendered homeless and got killed even innocent birds. Oh Foreigners! Where shall thee go from the land of Brij?)

It is also notable that after the independence of Mewat, the state of anarchy spread all over the area and the revolutionaries and loyalists i.e. Meos, Jats, Goojars, Rajputs etc. began to settle their old disputes at the same time.¹² In the mid of June 1857 Major W.F. Eden, political agent Jaipur with a big force comprising of 6000 men and 7 guns marched to Delhi through Mewat. On his way to Delhi Meos disturbed him and he tried to settle Mewat turbulence before Delhi. Between Taoru and Sohna, hard nut Meos fought valiantly and Eden's force suffered heavy losses.¹³ In these battles the Meo leaders Saadat Khan and Mehrab Khan killed many army men of Major Eden.¹⁴ At Sohna,

9. They are an allied caste of the Meos but consider themselves superior than the Meos.

10. K.C. Yadav, *Revolt of 1857 in Haryana*, New Delhi, 1977, p. 58, see also *Tarikh-Meo-Kshatriya*, p.455 and *Meos of India*, p. 311.

11. *Tarikh-Meo-Kshatriya*, p. 455.

12. In the parganas of Palwal near Hodal, Meos and Rawats started civil war for a village Kot. Rawats, with the help of Rajputs of Hathin and the British, defeated the Meos. But the revolutionaries supported the Meos and the Rawats met heavy casualties. In Ferozpur Jhirka two Meo Chaudharies Chand Khan of Bazipur and Kabir Khan of Bokharka fought, looted and burnt each other's villages. In this civil war nearly 50 or 60 people were killed. Nawab Amil Khan of Ferozpur Jhirka left the town for British asylum. (*Punjab District Gazetteer*, Vol, IV-A, p. 124 and 20-25).

13. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, p. 61 and K.C. Yadav, p. 105.

14. *Amar Ujala*, 20th Nov. 2004.

William Ford with his small army, met Eden. They jointly moved to Palwal and fought with the revolutionaries of Palwal Hodal for a long time.¹⁵ On 1st July 1857, they moved to Delhi and joined other forces to drive out the revolutionaries from Delhi.¹⁶ In August 1857 Major Eden, due to sickness, discontent and growing spirit of revolt among his forces, returned to Jaipur.¹⁷

With the assistance of the forces of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Kashmir states, the British forces conquered Delhi on 20th September 1857. At this fateful time Mewat still remained rebellious and under the leadership of Ali Hasan Khan and his father-in-law Samad Khan gave toughest resistance to the British forces mostly under the command of Mr. Ford.¹⁸ On 2nd Oct. a strong force of 1500 men, 18 ponder guns and 2 mortars, Brigadier General Showers was sent to settle Mewat issue. He was assisted by Mr. Clifford¹⁹ Assistant Collector (ADC) of Gurgaon. He had fire of revenge against the rebels. He burnt villages of Mewat and put to death all he came across and did not spare even women and children.²⁰ Showers and Clifford attacked the rebellious village Raiseena but Meos gave tough resistance and killed 60 army men including Clifford. At last British forces (Gorkha Regiment), under Showers, with assistance of Ford defeated the Meos and killed them ruthlessly and burnt the village.²¹ He also carried fire and sword to the villages between Dharuhera and Taoru.²²

After overpowering rebels around Sohna, Hathin, Palwal and Taoru, Showers returned to Delhi, giving the charge of Mewat to Captain Drummond.²³ On his instructions, the Kumaon Regiment under Lt. H. Grant, attacked Ghasera and in that fierce battle 160 Meos were killed.²⁴ In the mid of Nov. 1857, Cap. Drummond received news that several thousand Meos of

15. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, p. 62.

16. *Punjab District Gazetteer*, Vol, IV-A, p. 24.

17. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, p. 62.

18. *Meos of India*, p. 32.

19. Clifford's sister was stripped naked at the Delhi palace, tied in that condition to wheels of gun carriages, and in the presence of King's son, she was cut to pieces. (*Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, p.62)

20. *Ibid.*; see also *Meo Darpan*, August 1997, and Hashim Amir Ali, *The Meos of Mewat*, New Delhi, 1970, p. 28.

21. *Tarikh-Meo-Kshatriya*, pp.459-60.

22. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, p. 62 see also *Amar Ujala*, 15th August 2005, and *Meo Darpan*, August 1997, p.18.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

24. In Ghasera and Raiseena the Meos on their turn forced the Britishers to run barefoot on thorny bushes. (*Amar Ujala*, 20th November 2004).

Rupraka and Kot were fighting with the loyal Rajputs of Hathin and had intention to attack Palwal. Drummond, along with Tohana Horses, Hodson Horses, 102 men of Kumaon Battalion and 1st Punjab Infantry under Coke proceeded towards Rupraka. On his way he occupied the villages like Pachanka, Gopur, Malpuri, Chilli, Utawar, Kot Mangla, Mitaka, Kuluka, Guraksar, Maluka, Jhanda etc. He reached Rupraka on 19th Nov. 1857 where 3500 Meos fought heroically but lost the battle and around 400 Meos lost their lives.²⁵ After Rupraka the British burnt the villages like Shikrawa, Ghasera, Khilluka, Pinangwa, Nai, Singer, Nagina etc.²⁶

On 27th Nov. 1857 Meo rebels under Saifuddin attacked Pinangwan. The British responded quickly and a contingent (Gorkha Regiment) was immediately dispatched under Cap. Ramsay with assistance of Joint Magistrate of Gurgaon McPherson, and they met the rebels in a small village Mahun. They defeated the Meos and killed 28 in the village including a son of Sadruddin. British forces killed another 42 men in the neighboring villages. The village like Shahpur, Bali, Khera, Kherla, Nahirika, Gujar Nagla, Baharpur, Kheri etc. were set on fire by the British forces and wiped out of existence.²⁷ At Nuh, a small force under McPherson, Joint Magistrate of Gurgaon attacked Meo rebels under Ch. Nahar Khan in which McPherson was killed. In retaliation, Britishers attacked Nuh town and hanged 52 Meos from Nuh and nearby villages. Besides this, 42 Meos were hanged at Ferozepur Jhirka and 18 at Gahlab.²⁸ If we believe oral statement and interviews of Mirasies and village headmen, we find that till 29th of Nov. 1857, 3600 Meos were killed and a large number of Meos were captured and sent to Delhi where they were tried and hanged.

Around 102 Meos were hanged in Delhi. They were captured and hanged according to the following list:²⁹

S.No.	Name of the village	No. of the Meos hanged in Delhi
1.	Nangli	16
2.	Nuh	1
3.	Husainpur	20
4.	Barka	5

25. *Mutiny Records Correspondence*, Lahore, 1911, pp.229-30 (National Archives of India, New Delhi).

26. *Amar Ujala*, 15th August 2005.

27. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, p.64.

28. *Amar Ujulu*, 15th August 2005.

29. *New Meo Times*, 1st November 1994.

5.	Raiseena	4
6.	Gwarka	1
7.	Jaroli	1
8.	Sultanpur	10
9.	Ahkhan	4
10.	Sewali	2
11.	Gudrana	2
12.	Sarai	1
13.	Kherli	1
14.	Sohna	16
15.	Kanoli	1
16.	Gurgaon	7
17.	Palwal	10

The Meos still feel proud of their thousands of martyrs who got the greatest award of patriotism, the death sentence. In memory of the martyrs the Meos still prefer to name their children after the freedom fighters like Sadruddin, Ali Hasan Khan, Samad Khan, Saadat Khan, Mehrab Khan, Nahar Khan etc. The following couplet of Bahadurshah Zafar befits for the martyrs of Mewat:

*Hue dafan jo the we bekafan,
Unhe rota abre bahar hai,
Ki parhite hain farishte fatiha,
Na nishan hai na mazar hai.*

(The clouds of spring weep over the martyrs buried shroudless. Although no sign or tomb is left of them, the Angels pray for them.)

After the suppression of the revolt, the British Government continued its relentless policy, harshness and took no step to develop the region of Mewat educationally and economically excepting a few instances. This area was deliberately kept backward.

AN ANALYSIS OF EMERGENCE OF BHAINI SAHIB HEADQUARTERS AND ITS ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

*Babusha Maingi**

The Bhaini Sahib is a historical place. It has been a headquarters of the Namdhari Sikhs over a period of hundred and fifty years. It is from this headquarters that the Sikhs launched a mass movement against the foreign rule and laid their lives in last quarter of 19th century. In 20th century the Namdhari movement became complimentary to the national movement. The Bhaini Sahib has had been a sacred place both for the Namdhari Sikhs and Indian Nationalists. How did non-descript village *Bhaini Aryian* or *Aala* emerge as headquarters? It is a query directly related to the scope of this paper.

Bhaini Sahib is situated on the National Highway from Ludhiana to Chandigarh. While a link road at a distance of 25 kms from Ludhiana having a length of 3 Kms adjoins the Bhaini Sahib with the highway.¹ From Bhaini towards North-West direction, at a distance of 2.5 kms is situated a locality called *Bhaini Ranian*. This is the birth place of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh. The word *Aryian* seems a distortion of word *Rainan* which originated from *Rai*, a *gotra* of *zamindars* of this village.²

In the beginning of 19th century a landlord of *Aryian* village, Bhunder, by name built up his residence in his farms which were away from the village. Inhabitants of the same village found that the land was "*shamlat*" (owned by the government) so they also constructed their residences quite near to "Bhunder". Afterwards it became popular by the name "*Bhaini Bhunder*".³

The *dera* by the passage of time grew in the form of a locality after the death of '*Bhunder*', the founder. The locality was ruined, after a span of years it was again populated by a landlord '*Ahala*' by name and the locality got the eponym of *Bhaini Aala*. The referred fact has been confirmed by

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1. *Punjab District Gazetteers, Ludhiana 1970*, p. 639.

2. *Ibid.* ; Pritam Singh Kavi, *Mahima Bhaini Sahib Di*, Sarab Hind Namdhari Vidyak Jatha, 2000, p. 4 (hereafter Pritam Singh).

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 639-40; *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

Bishen Singh historian in his work *Bagi Kuka*.⁴ The founder of this village thought to settle a *Ramgarhia* family, which professionally engaged in the jobs of black smith and carpenters. Baba Lakha Singh, the initial settler, was a blacksmith and *Matharu* by gotra. He had four sons, Natha Singh, Jassa Singh, Sahib Singh and Sarwan Singh. Bhai Natha Singh and Jassa Singh rendered skilled services to fulfil the requirements of farmers of *Bhaini Aala* and became *sepidars* of this village. Both brothers settled their separate families in the village. Here, Namdhari Guru Ram Singh was born in the house of sardar Jassa Singh in the year 1816 AD.

Namdhari Guru Ram Singh was brought up here and in his youth he got a job in the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. After quitting his job, he came back to his native village and took to agriculture. Then a Jat farmer Bhai Lehna brought him to Bhaini in 1849 AD, and assigned a strip of his land to Namdhari Guru Ram Singh. When Namdhari Guru Rain Singh returned from his maternal uncle's residence in Ferozepur, Bhai Lehna Singh gifted a piece of five *bigha* land to Namdhari Guru Ram Singh who got constructed a house and began to live calmly therein.⁵ When Bhai Lehna died, his sons gifted more five *bighas* land to Baba Ram Singh. Similarly, Bhai Mela Singh who had no successor, gifted his lands to Namdhari Guru Hari Singh the successor of Baba Ram Singh.⁶

The devotees of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh continued to donate their lands and the locality of Bhaini Sahib developed with the passage of time. During the time of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh some specific constructions were completed. *Thara Sahib* (threshold) was concreted and it is at the very place where the *satguru* used to perform the religious functions.⁷ Early in the dawn, *Rag Asa* (*Asa Di Var*) was chanted and recitation of God's name was practised one hour daily in the evening hours and holy singing was also perpetuated.⁸ The next remarkable work done by Namdhari Guru Ram Singh was to install an iron-plate called 'Amar Loh' for cooking *langar*.⁹ There, no one was allowed to enter the kitchen who drank water driven by hand pumps.

Near the kitchen hall of the 'Amar Loh', there were four or five double storey rooms. The lower rooms were used by Bibi Nanda and Bhai

4. Pritam Singh Kavi, p. 5.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

7. *Punjab District Gazetteers, Ludhiana*, 1970, p. 640.

8. *Punjab District Gazetteers, Ludhiana*, 1970, p. 640.

9. *Ibid.*

Surat Singh (grand son of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh). The upper terraces were used by the manager of Bhaini Sahib i.e. *Mahant* Sewa Singh. There was one more room constructed for the use of Hari Singh ji where he used to recite the name in solitude. The terrace was called "*Gaddi Sahib*". Another significant building called "*Akal Bunga*" situated in the outside of the village was constructed. Namdhari Guru Ram Singh used to sit there alone and practice the recitation of Name. Namdhari Guru Hari Singh in the sacred memory of his predecessors established a water pool and was named after him, "*Ramsar Sarover*". It was dug on the suggestion of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh. It was believed that during the third epoch, Sri Ram Chandra used to perform *havan* here. It is said, while its construction was in a progress, a triangular shaped *havan* pit was found here alongwith the burnt coals. The place was named also *Ramdaspur* and pool was called *Ramsar*.¹⁰

During the life time of the second spiritual Guru, Mata Jewan Kaur and Namdhari Guru Hari Singh got constructed a *kothi* in a peaceful environment. It was got built for the use of his son who was 10 years old and the forthcoming guru. This building was known as *Ramsar Wali Kothi*.¹¹ Besides it, the site had a temporary *kacha* resort for *Ravidasis* and *Mazhabis*. During the tenure of *Satguru* Partap Singh, he also continuously extended the development of Bhaini Sahib. The place where his father was cremated, Namdhari Guru Partap Singh got removed cremation mark as some of devotees started burning lamps at that place. A simple *kacha* structure was constructed and named *Hari Munder*. It became a centre of mediation. Similarly, a structure known as *Shahidi Bunga* was constructed at the spot where 'Mother' Bupinder Kaur and Maharaj Gurdial Singh were cremated. Namdhari Guru Partap Singh constructed, a small terrace with concrete and it has generally brought in use during the *rainy season* (moonson) for the purpose of yearly festival or practising the recitation of Name. He also managed the construction of *Akhand Varni* in 1934, which is continuous even at present. His devotion towards animals is well known; so he built vast verandahs for horses and cattle in Bhaini Sahib. *Satguru* also provided separate residential facilities, for Mata Bhupinder Kaur, called *Mata Bupinder Nivas* where Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh, the present Guru and Maharaj Bir Singh took birth.¹² Besides, that

10. Dalip Singh Namdhari, *Gatha Sutanirta Sangram Di*, Namdhari Darbar Shri Bhaini Sahib, 2002, p. 11; In the *hukamnamas* of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh, he himself refers Bhaini Sahib as Ramdaspur; for detail see- Jaswinder Singh (ed.), *Sant Santokh Singh Bahawal Krit Satguru Bilas*, Vol.-I, Namdhari Darbar Shri Bhaini Sahib, 2002, p. 16.

11. Pritam Singh Kavi, p. 5.

12. Pritam Singh Kavi, p. 16.

Satguru, constructed *Namdhari Vidyalya* and residential buildings for pilgrims which they used to stay for some days. Moreover, Namdhari Guru constructed a rectangular shape room, which was made of bamboos and straw. In his own time, it was known as *Goal Chhapar*. It was here that 'Satguru' departed from the world in 1959. By that time, it came to be known as *Goal Mandir*. Present guru, established *Akhand Varni* in the memory of his father which is still continuing in the residence of late Namdhari Guru Partap Singh. Namdhari Guru also took care about the common kitchen, which required a big quantity of wheat flour daily. To meet this requirement the traditional flour mill known as *kharas* was installed.

Present Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh became spiritual head in 1959. He gave his attention to the establishment of Jewan Nagar which is the second centre of the sect. But, he was absolutely aware about the importance of headquarters of Bhaini Sahib. It was historical place of the *Sant Khalsa* from where the inspiration for the freedom of the country had emerged. It had been the birth place of three gurus of the Namdhari sect. The neighbouring buildings around the headquarters were purchased and the building of the free kitchen was extended more. It was planned and accomplished by the systematic efforts and guidelines of Mata Chand Kaur while architect Mr. Nirmal Singh and engineer Sardar Jaswant Singh helped her in specific duties. For Namdhari followers *Bhaini Sahib* and *Bhaini Araina* were already pilgrimages but due to the continuous efforts of Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh that the Punjab government paying homage to the Martyred Kuka declared the locality of *Aryian* and *Bhaini* both as sacred sites on 3 February, 1978.

At present, the headquarters of Bhaini Sahib has more than 80 acres of land attached to its. It has 6 acres of land in the village *Aryian* engaged in horticulture. Near about one hundred acres of land is owned by the headquarters in the Satluj river which is highly productive while 50 acres of land has been in the *Dirya Burk*.¹³

In the latest constructions, the Satguru has got built a huge hall for the use of ladies where they may sit together and meditate, Called "*Maian Wala Vehra*". The Satguru has constituted a committee for the extension and construction of the Gurdwara, called "*Bhaini Sahib Vikas Samiti*". This committee plans each kind of duties of construction work. It has built a seven feet concrete wall around the whole headquarters called *Vikas Diwar*. The Namdhari guru has also allowed the followers or visitors of the festival to construct their residents under the "*Swaih Sahayata Vivastha*" (self source

13. Pritam Singh Kavi, p. 25.

programme). They attend the festivals and reside there. The residential mansion of the Namdhari guru has been given a magnificent shape. Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh has provided all the modern facilities to this area, i.e. a branch of Bank of Baroda, Grid Station of Punjab and telephone facilities etc.

From the nineteenth to twenty first century, the headquarters Shri Bhaini Sahib already had been developed to meet with the needs of the time. The administrative infrastructure also has been developed. There is a large number of people who are incharge of administrative departments and institutions. The scope of this article is to examine the social background of these personnel and nature of their functioning. This study is based upon the data collected by me.

To understand the present leadership, their social background in terms of caste and occupation and to know their social hierarchy in administration it is necessary to have adequate knowledge about different organizations of this sect as well as their interrelations and structures.

Background of these administrative personnel goes back to Namdhari Guru Ram Singh's time when he founded *Sant Khalsa* in April 1857. Namdhari Guru Ram Singh introduced some radical changes both at the ideological and organizational levels. He revived the *Khalsa* tradition and initiated his followers through baptism of Sword, *khande-di-pahul*, neglected long since.¹⁴ Simultaneously, Namdhari Guru *Ram Singh* paid attention to the organization setup. During his quasi confinement Namdhari Guru Ram Singh and his ardent followers started organizing a parallel government of their own in Punjab. It was fascinating underground administration designed to function under the very nose of the British rulers and masters. It was *Suba system*.¹⁵ There were 22 subas. The Namdhari writers assimilate and co-relate this infrastructure with the *Manji* System founded by Guru Ram Dass. Since those, too, were 22 in numbers. Some of them correlated this fact with 22 Sikh chiefs who accompanied Guru Gobind Singh during the battle fought against the oppressive rulers i.e. Mughals.¹⁶ To look after the Suba System, Namdhari Guru Ram Singh established a *Cultural Panchayat* of 5 Subas. Satgurus used to allot jurisdiction to each *Suba* according to his choice. He was asked about the region in which he was comfortably able to propagate his mission. The deputed person was then sent to the area and asked to play his part in the missionary

14. Joginder Singh, "Popular Sikh Movement", p. 107.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

duties.¹⁷ There were also *Naib Subedars* and *Jathedars* to run the newly established administration in small area units. Besides, *Granthis* also used to play their important role for preaching the teachings of the sect.¹⁸

It is interesting to note that even now during 21st century, the same *Suba* system is performing its duties but with minor changes. The traditional functions have been re-adjusted with the modern system and all the *Subas* are functioning smoothly. The duties of the *Subas* are assigned as under (a) to preach the teaching of *Gurmat*, administer *bhajan* and *amrit*, to recite the holy *granth*, as well as to manage and patronize- such recitations (b) settling the local disputes with utmost impartiality (c) to collecting *daswand* from the followers in the name of the Guru (d) to secure the peaceful environment in their jurisdiction (e) to complaint about the followers who cannot accomplish their religious duties. (f) to manage the *dak* system in their region.¹⁹ Besides, these *Subas* also manage the festival of *Hola-Mohalla*, assist and support the public in the affairs of Anand Marriages and propagate the instruction of the Guru to the congregations.

It is interesting to note that the *subas* of the post-independence times are not sufficiently active in politics. Undoubtedly, they were more politically active during the time of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh. At present, they have confined themselves to the socio-religious activities only. Some of their functions have been transferred to the presidents, the recently deputed functionaries.

Of each religion every organization is generally based upon the devotion of its followers which comes from the ground level, with an aim to unite the public and preach the teachings of the sect. This task was performed by the *dharamsalas* i.e. religious-centres. Founding *dharamsalas* was a necessary as well as the basic need of the sect. Till the nineteenth century the Sikh temples or worship places were known as *dharamsalas*.²⁰ Every one, without the discrimination of the caste distinction, was allowed to visit Namdhari *dharamsalas*. At *dharamsalas* the Namdhari Sikhs also used to settle their affairs and perform duties. Another serious effort to propagate their mission was made by Namdhari Guru Ram Singh in 1865 AD when he introduced

17. Fauja Singh, *Kuka Movement*, p. 34.

18. Fauja Singh, *Kuka Movement*, p. 34.

19. *Satjug Vishesh Ank*, 2001, p. 48.

20. Harjinder Singh Dilgir, *The Sikh Reference Book*, Sikh Educational Trust, Canada, 1997, p. 50.

Namdhari Hollas. Before his exile, he organized six such Hollas.²¹

The concepts of *Sant Khalsa* as well as the practice of *Suba System*, *langar* and *Dharamsalas* had been accomplished during the *guruship* of the first two spiritual teachers. An infrastructure to govern and administer the whole system was prepared step by step. In the life time of Namdhari Guru Partap Singh the propagation of the sect was on the highest peak. During his time in 1921, the *Namdhari Darbar* was established. It was a remarkable step of the sect. The *Darbar* was formed to assist and support the other parties engaged for the independence of the country. It had also a motif to intermediate and react against the British politics. It had to receive permission of the Satguru and then resolve to help practically the activities of the Congress or of the Akalis.²² Namdhari Guru Partap Singh admitted the responsibilities of the Darbar and deputed his younger brother Gurdial Singh to act as its head. More than two dozen members were attached with him for help. Before the emergence of *Namdhari Darbar*; two minor organizations named- *Sewak Dal* and *Sarb Srishti Dal* were already active in these functions. Both organizations were abolished and the support was provided to the *Namdhari Darbar*. To meet with the vital expenses of the *Darbar* a huge amount of 10,000 was granted. In the elections of these members, the political awareness and aptitude of the members was kept in view by the *Satguru*. Being a head of the *Namdhari Panth*, the organizations were working under his (*Satguru*) guidelines. The tenure of each functionary of these organizations was fixed on the basis of his adequacy in the Namdhari discipline and personal loyalty towards the *Satguru*. The Namdhari Guru if ever he found some one guilty in regard to faith and discipline of the sect, he had power to change him with the new one. Even he had full authority to dismiss the *Darbar*. He had assigned this power on the occasion of a festival of the *Holla Mohalla* at Muktsar (Punjab).²³

The study of the *Namdhari Darbar* will not be completed until or unless we do not have information about the weekly Journal of the sect *SATJUG* by name. It was first published by Maharaj Gurdial Singh from Lehar, at Varni *Holla* in 1920. It had an object to propagate the teachings of the sect as well

21. From 1899 A.D., onwards, Satguru Hari Singh restarted the practice and held eight such *Hollas* at different places during his time from 1907 to 1959. Satguru Partap Singh held 53 *Hollas* at different parts of State as well as in abroad.

22. Tara Singh Anjan, *Sahib Guni Gahira*, Satguru Partap Singh Avtar Shtabdi Committee, Delhi, 1991, p. 69.

23. Tara Singh Anjan, *Sahib Guni Gahera*, p. 69.

as to publicize the resolutions of the *Namdhari Darbar* time to time. *Sant Nirankar Singh Chitan* was its first editor while its managers and publisher's duties were accomplished by Maharaja Gurdial Singh.²⁴ After sometime its publication office was shifted to Bhaini Sahib and during these days it is published from Delhi.²⁵ Like *Namdhari Darbar*, *Satjug* was also granted an amount of 10,000 to meet with its expenses.²⁶ The journal was successfully defending the allegations put-forth against the sect by the rival, journals like *Khalsa Samachar* and *Khalsa Advocate*. Afterwards newspapers *Kuka* (1922) and *Mastana* also emerged on the scene but they could not survive for a long time.²⁷ After some time a tract *Sant Khalsa* (1936 AD) was published by *Namdhari Darbar* but it was confiscated by the British government.²⁸ After sometime *Navan Hindustan* and *Waryam* two more journals became active in the propagation media of the *Darbar*.

To promote the teachings of the sect, the present guru, Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh established an organization *Namdhari Vidyak Jatha* in 1965. In the same manner another organization *Nandhari Istri Vidyak Jatha* came into being in 1981. The main objective of these *Jathas* was to share the social duties as well as to save the youth and women from the irreligious and ignoble effects of the rival cultures.²⁹

The above mentioned institutions were governed from Sri Bhaini Sahib. *Satuguru* himself is the supreme commander having full right to dismiss or depute any functionary. He has also established a well planned administrative body for his own help to govern headquarters as well as to propagate specific instructions time to time to his followers.

The functionaries appointed in the units and bodies belong to different castes and tribes without any distinction or discrimination. A survey of 42 persons of the headquarters Bhaini Sahib has been conducted and information about their castes and occupations, family background, functions as well as their place in the social hierarchy of Namdhari administration has been collected. If we look into the background of Namdhari administrative personnels of Bhaini Sahib in 20th century, *Mahant Meva Singh* of village *Sudari Majra*, district Ambala was the first Manager during the tenure of

24. Dewinder Singh Gill, "Satjug Akbar Da Sutantrata Sangram Laie Yogdan", *Satjug*, 2001, pp. 28-33.

25. Tara Singh Anjan, "Satjug De Assi Salla Vishesh Ank Baire", *Satguru* 2001, p. 2.

26. Tara Singh Anjan, *Sahib Guni Gahera*, p. 69.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

28. *Satjug*, 2001, p. 55.

29. *Namdhari Holla Mohalla*, 8, 9, 10 and 11 March 1985, p - i.

Namdhari Guru Hari Singh and Namdhari Guru Partap Singh. He was also the incharge of the Namdhari Journal *Satjug* alongwith Mata Jiwan Kaur. He tried his best to acquire the land for Bhaini Sahib. Seth Pritam Singh, Sant Kishan Singh of Kanganpur and Sant Hamam Singh *Nathiania* had been in the services of Namdhari Guru Hari Singh. During the Guruship of Namdhari Guru Partap Singh. Bhaini Sahib got its first team including Sant Mastan Singh of Kiaspur, Sant Inder Singh Chakarvarti, S. Gurmukh Singh Jabbar, S. Bhagat Singh and S. Gurdial Singh. His younger brother also helped to manage the administration of the headquarters.

In the same way Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh managed and controlled the *dera* and give every guideline to his administrators. The whole infrastructure of Shri Bhaini Sahib, now to function in an effective way has facilitated with modern techniques. There are two main chiefs first, namely Sant Jagtar Singh and second Thakur Uday Singh. Both of the chiefs are closely related with the family of Namdhari Guru. Sant Jagtar Singh is the son-in-law of the Satguru while Thakur Uday Singh is his younger nephew. Both enjoy a considerable latitude in the matters of transfer, promotion and even dismissal of administrative functionaries. Both deal with financial matters, checking and auditing wages and salaries of the functionaries, to manage the vehicles, to arrange the *Holla Mohalla* festival, to buy furniture for the use of the headquarters, to deal with the government as well to remain intact with assigned organizations. The functionaries of the *Dera* as well as sect also remain in touch with them. The outsiders, visitors too, ought to consult them firstly. They try to resolve the matter under their jurisdiction otherwise the request is referred to Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh. He may decide the case himself or in consultation with the members of *Namdhari Darbar*. The *langar* of the *Dera* has important significance. It is managed by Mata Chand Kaur, the wife of Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh. She has some assistants to run it smoothly.

There are more auxiliary organizations functioning at Bhaini Sahib. A large number of Namdhari leaders are operating them efficiently. These organizations are the *Vishav Namdhari Vidyak Jatha*, *Vishav Namdhari Istri Vidyak Jatha*, *Anand Karaj Parbandhak Committee*, *Gaushala Parbandhak Committee*, *Lekha Vibhag Parbandhak Committee*, *Aau Bhagat Committee* (receptionist), *Shud Gurbani Path Parbandhak Committee*, *Namdhari Sports Academy*, *Satguru Partap Singh Academy* etc.

In a sample study, we conducted interviews alongwith fourteen head functionaries. In terms of caste background, Namdhari Jats dominate (9 out of 14). Next to them are Ramgarhia and one belongs to the Prajapt caste. At present *Suba* Balwinder Singh is looking after the functioning of the

headquarters. He performs his assigned duties satisfactorily and plays a significant role in the religious matters. He belongs to the village *Jhal* by name situated in the Tehsil Malerkotla of district Sangrur. He also performs his duties as president of the *Vishav Namdhari Vidhak Jatha*. The Namdhari personnel belong to Thind, Maan, Cheema, Bhinder and Dhaliwal sub-castes. They are agriculturists. Besides, two of them are also engaged in trade including the side business as a farmer. Four of them own one to ten acres of land; two owning 11 to 20 acres and one of them is a big farmer owning 125 acres of land. However, one of them has sold his whole landed property. Thus, the first category of them holds 55.5%, the second 22.22% and third has 11.11% of agricultural land. It has been revealed that these agriculturists had four times more land holdings which they left in Pakistan during the partition. Allotment of land after partition reduced the volume of their respective land holdings. Among these agriculturists four are migrants from Pakistan. The Ministry of Rehabilitation allotted them lands but not recompensation for houses. In the allotment of land it has found that Namdhari guru was the first one to take the government help for the resettlement of his followers. Since the Namdhari spiritual leaders have had good relation with the Congress party, it is probable that it might have been helpful in this regard.

The Namdhari Jat entered Namdhari Movement right from its beginning. The above mentioned personnel is not exception to this. Four of them responded to Namdhari Guru Ram Singh's mission; two Guru Partap Singh and one Namdhari Guru Hari Singh. However, response of agriculturists, in the post independence is very lukewarm. There are two personnels who are engaged in agriculture and trade. Among these one was horse trader who was prosperous during the times of Namdhari Guru Partap Singh. It is a well known fact that Namdhari Guru Partap Singh had encouraged his followers to husband horses and rear their good breeds.³⁰ The Namdhari Bangalore farm and Namdhari herbs have come into being.

It is important to note that none of these personnel is under debt. Economically they are well off. Moreover except one, all of them are qualified upto graduation or under-graduation. It may be pointed out here that Namdhari Guru can assign any duty to them (in the *langar*, *gaushala*, reception, committee, scripture recitation and in accounts). They are competent to take over any duty if assigned to them.

30. Dr. Harbajan Singh, "Satguru Partap Singh Ji : Prabu Bhagti te Desh Bhagti de Sumel", Vadd Partap Achraj Roop, (ed.) Tara Singh Kamil, Jaswinder Singh, Tara Singh Anjan, Satguru Partap Singh Avtar Shatabdi Committee, 1990, pp. 51-77.

The standard of living of these functionaries has been good. They have good houses to live in. There are a few who go back to their own houses after the completion of their duties, since they have their personal lands, houses as well as families. *Suba* Balwinder Singh is one of such functionaries.

There are some specific reasons which are sustaining these personnel in the administrative hierarchy of Bhaini Sahib. They are not working for the material gains. They are devout Sikhs of Namdhari guru and are dedicated to their work. Being close to their guru, they enjoy a distinct status.

A dissatisfaction persists among the lower wing of administrative hierarchy. We may refer to the case of an assistant in *gaushala*. He opines that the present working condition and wages of the administration are not favourable to servants. He alleges that factional affiliations of servants have bearings on their position. He named a leader who enjoys greater latitude in financial and administrative affairs. Any servant associated with him enjoys more basic facilities. Any servant who dare to raise his voice against a discriminating attitude, this big leader can sack that person from his job. The servants feel financial as well as social discrimination.

At the same time top leaders of the administrative hierarchy feel that the deputies or *jathedars* do not perform their duties and obligations affectively. *Suba* Balwinder Singh underlines this shortcoming specifically. He argues that the former *Subas* and *Naib Subas* during the colonial period were more committed to the community-cause and had more spirit of sacrifice as compared to our contemporaries. Propagation of Namdhari mission has been going down.

Next to the Namdhari agriculturists are Ramgarhias. Among the total members of fourteen administrators, four are Ramgarhias. The status and position of Ramgarhia administrators depend upon the economic conditions of their families. Moreover, it also depends upon the nature of jobs they perform. For instance, personal attendants of Namdhari guru belong to Ramgarhia caste. It is by virtue of their being *sewaks*, they enjoy a special position. Sometimes, it is alleged that they and their close associates have formed a coterie and do not allow any access to others to meet the Namdhari Guru. It is also alleged that personal attendants usually have had been coming from Ramgarhia caste alone. Such allegation defies the logic of history. For instance, personal attendants of predecessors of present 'satguru' belong to castes other than Ramgarhias. In fact, there are certain duties and obligations of *sewak* which are not being appreciated by the people around them or by outsiders. Of course, there is a latitude in exercising their discretion to allow the people to have *darshan* of their satguru. However, it is ultimately 'Satguru' who gives permission.

Besides, there are other personnels. These personnel include women who too enjoy high status, Bibi Sukhjit Kaur, Ramgarhia by caste, is the (head) incharge of the *Vishaw Namdhari Vidvak Jatha* while Bibi Amarjit Kaur is the treasurer of this organisation. Both of them belong to the urban areas as well as belong to a respectable and educated families. They perform their duties efficiently.

Sardar Gurmukh Singh perform the services of palanquin of the Satguru. He also deals in the occupation of the video recording. He owns a factory and is contractor but under the will of Namdhari guru, he resides in the Darbar. These personnels enjoy good facilities. Their children get free education. Moreover, new buildings are constructed for them. Time to time they are granted financial help by the *Satguru*. The *Satguru* takes their help to propagate his message to the public. It is notable that due to the availability of the modern facilities, numerous persons of this headquarter have received higher education. There are a few persons from 45 to 55 years, who are educated from matric to graduation level. They have become capable of leading their lives successfully. Perhaps, it could be the reason, that's why, they shift to urban areas for more job avenues.

Besides the above mentioned functionaries, there are 27 *sewadars* (helpers) in the headquarters who perform their duties to run the daily routine Work. In terms of their occupational background, out of 27 *sewadars*, 15 of them belong to *Jat Sikh* caste, while the other 12 are non-Jats, further, out of the 12 non-Jats only six are Ramgarhia, two Parjapats, 2 Ramdasis, one is Majhabi and Brahmin. The *Jat sewadars* belong to Bassi, Dhillon, Sandhu, Khangaru, Waraich, Guru, Purewal, Randhawa and Maan sub-castes. All of them have come to this headquarters for humanitarian cause. Some of them own agricultural land as follow:

Area of lands in acres	Number of Agriculturist <i>Sewadars</i>
1 to 10	8
11 to 20	2
21 to 30	1
50 to 100	1
100 to 150	1

Among the 15, *Jat Sikh sewadars*, only 8 *sewadars* have their own agricultural land. They have good economic background and live at the headquarters voluntarily. Some of these *sewadars* (two) are under debt ranging from 6 to 70 lacs. Of all these *sewadars*, two are traders. They perform various duties including looking after *gaushala*, *langar* and photography. They have their independent accommodations. Except a single *sewadar*, all are under Matric. If we compare the Namdhari *Jat Sikh* administrators with

Jat Sikh *sewadars*, first are well qualified from Matric to Graduation whereas the *sewadars* are academically less qualified than the higher functionaries. Their ancestors became Namdhari Sikhs during the tenure of different Satgurus.

Conversion of Jat Sikh *Sewadars*

Namdhari guru	Jat Sikh <i>sewadars</i>
Namdhari Guru Ram Singh	7
Namdhari Guru Hari Singh	3
Namdhari Guru Partap Singh	5
Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh	1

After Jat Sikhs, next to them are Ramgarhias, Parjapats, Ramdasis, Mazhabis, Brahmin and Yadav *sewadars*. Ramgarhia *sewadars* are six in number. While the other belonging to above mentioned castes there is only one each. Of the Ramgarhias *sewadars* there is only one who is music teacher while rest of them are engaged as artisans and shopkeepers. The Brahmin Namdhari *sewadar* enjoys a respectable place as he manages the organization of *Diwan*. The *sewadar* from the *Kumhar* (potter) background is serving in *langar* hall. There is also a teacher S. Raghbir Singh who belongs to the same caste. He is a retired teacher and runs a bookstall at Bhaini Sahib. He had tried election as MLA in favour of BJP, from Sirsa. The Mazhabi *sewadars* are engaged in their traditional occupation. They have their separate quarters and cook their own food. Although, they are provided some basic requirements including some financial help but they live hand to mouth. Their wages are too low to meet their day to day requirements. One of them took bank loan for buying a buffalo. Besides they also face social discrimination. For Namdhari Sikhs of higher castes, they are untouchable. For instance Jagtar Singh who operates sewerage system is paid only 1400 Rs per month. Balwinder Kaur whose husband has expired is engaged in stitching clothes and is paid only 500 rupees monthly. The *sewadars* belonging to artisan classes became Namdharis at different times. Above mentioned *sewadars* embraced the sect during the guruship of Baba Ram Singh, two during the tenure of Baba Hari Singh, four during the time of Baba Partap Singh and three became Namdhari within the tenure of Baba Jagjit Singh. Their academic qualification except two, is under Matric.

On the whole Bhaini Sahib, a non descriptive village, became headquarters of Namdhari Sikhs in the second half of 19th century. It was Baba Ram Singh who founded this *dera* in its own village in the second half of the 19th century. Towards the end of the 19th century, the *dera* became a pilgrimage. Baba Ram Singh constructed specific buildings like *Thara Sahib*, *Amar Loh*, *Gaddi Sahib*, *Akal Bunga* etc. Namdhari Guru Ram Singh's

successor Namdhari Guru Hari Singh also established a tank called *Ramsar Sarover* in the sacred memory of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh. In the early 20th century, some more religious and cultural institutions came into being under the leadership of Namdhari Guru Partap Singh. Satguru constructed various buildings like *Hari Mandir*, *Shahidi Bunga*, *Akhand Warni* etc. In the year 1921, the Namdhari Darbar was established. Subsequently, present Namdhari Guru Jagjit Singh is also keen to expand the headquarters. At present, headquarters has more than 80 acres of land. The Punjab government declared the locality of *Raina* and *Bhaini* both as sacred sites.

To look after the above mention administrative units Namdhari Guru appointed various functionaries, who came from agriculturist and artisan classes. These functionaries are paid wages and salaries in lieu of their services rendered to the headquarters. They are also provided accommodation and financial aid on special occasions by the Dera Bhaini Sahib. Namdhari guru also takes care to impart education to the children of these personnel. On the basis of the facts, it is important to mention that majority of the Namdhari Sikhs are Jat Sikh agriculturists and Ramgarhias.

BHAGAT SINGH: HIS IDEOLOGY AND STRATEGY

*Surender Kaur Goraya**

Among the young Indian heroes, who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the country, Sardar Bhagat Singh stands out as a symbol of martyrdom. He was the first Indian to raise the slogan of *Inquilaab Zindabad*.¹ He is known generally, best for the revenge he took of the death of Lala Lajpat Rai and the bombs he threw on the floor of the Central Assembly. But, his real motives are least understood. It would be a great injustice to the martyr to associate his name with only two incidents cited above without adequate explanation of the motive behind them. In absence of such explanation it gives the impression : (i) Lala Lajpat Rai's death was the only motivating source of Bhagat Singh's life, (ii) his political activities started after the arrival of Simon Commission, (iii) the purpose of his life was to take only revenge from the British and he had no ideology of his own (iv) he was worshipper of violence and bloodshed. This is not true. Therefore, an attempt has been made in the present paper to shed some light on the evolution of his revolutionary ideas, motivating factors, ideology and strategy adopted for the freedom of India.

Bhagat Singh struggled throughout his life for India's freedom. There were three main aims of his life: to live for the country, to fight for the country and to die for the country. Various factors were instrumental in determining the said purpose of his life. He was born at the time (1907), when some of the Indian leaders had already started thinking about driving the British out of the country, either through passive resistance or by force.

Bhagat Singh was born in Punjab which is known for the saint-soldiers who defended the honour of their motherland till the last drop of their blood, as the occasion arose from time to time. In Punjab, the socio-political consciousness started with the foundation of Sikhism by Guru Nanak Dev. The Guru did not only confine himself to socio-religious reforms, but raised his voice against the political tyranny of his contemporary rulers of Lodi

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1. Bhagwan Das Mahour, *Yash-Ki-Dharohar — Amar Shahid Bhagat Singh*, Atma Ram and Sons, Delhi, 1968, p. 27.

dynasty and against Babar. The consciousness created by his predecessors was consolidated as a sense of Nationalism by the tenth Guru — Guru Gobind Singh. He made Nationalism as a religion for his followers. Throughout his life he fought against political tyranny, injustice and intolerance. He even sacrificed his whole family for this noble cause.

In modern times, the first political upsurge started in Punjab with the *Kuka Movement*. Baba Ram Singh advocated that political freedom is a part of religion; therefore, Punjab had to be 'freed off *Feringhee's* (British) yoke. He preached non-cooperation with the British government long before Gandhi appeared on the political scene of India. In 1907, Ajit Singh and Lala Lajpat Rai launched 'No Tax' Campaign to oppose the Colonization Bill. The Ghadar Party was established in San Francisco in 1913. Its members reached Punjab with a plan to start revolution on 21 February, 1915. But a traitor, named Kirpal Singh failed the revolution by informing the government about the plans of the *Ghadarites*. But the latter were successful in infusing the feeling of nationalism among the Punjabis. Thereafter, there were Babbar Akalis, who could not bear injustice and exploitation of the poor masses and challenged the British.

Bhagat Singh was born and brought up in the family of patriots. He had in his veins the blood of patriots for three generations. His grandfather Sardar Arjan Singh actively participated in the socio-religious movements of the nineteenth century. He also participated in the Congress Session held at Lahore in 1893. His father Kishan Singh joined active politics and founded *Bharat Mata Society*. At the time of his birth his father and uncles - Sardar Ajit Singh and Swaran Singh were behind bars due to their nationalist activities. Though his father was released, but Ajit Singh was later on sent to Mandlay Jail, whereas, Swaran Singh died in Jail in 1908.²

During the exile of Ajit Singh, his wife Harnam Kaur used to recount the atrocities of the British government. Adventures of her husband made undeniable impression on the mind of Bhagat Singh, since childhood. He cherished a desire to drive the British out of India. With this purpose, a thought of 'planting the rifles' also flashed in his mind, when he was hardly two and a half years old.³ The story of *Ghadarite* rebellion, especially the heroic efforts of Ras Behari Bose, Sachindra Sanyal and the hanging of Kartar Singh Sarabha,

2. Swaran Singh, *Path of Revolution - A Biography of Shaheed Bhagat Singh*, Wellwish Publishers, Delhi, 1998, p. 18.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

a youth of hardly 20 years had a lasting impact on the receptive mind of the nine year old Bhagat Singh.⁴

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, on April 1919 made 12 year old Bhagat Singh the enemy of the British rule in India. During the Non-Cooperation Movement, in response to the appeal made by the National leadership, especially Mahatma Gandhi, to shun the institutions run and aided by the government, Bhagat Singh left D.A.V. College, Lahore. In 1921, he joined National College, Lahore which was founded by Nationalists - Bhai Parmanand and Lajpat Rai. There he came in contact with Bhagwati Charan, Sukhdev, Yashpal, Ram Krishna and Tirath Ram. The college provided free environment for the discussion of prevailing conditions in India.⁵

The sudden suspension of Non-Cooperation Movement shattered the high hopes raised by the Congress leadership. It created doubts in the minds of young people regarding the strategy of national leaders and they joined revolutionary camp. Describing the dissatisfaction of the young leaders with the strategy of the Congress, Bipan Chandra said:

It was not accidental that nearly all the major new leaders of the revolutionary terrorist politics, for example, Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee, Surya Sen, Jatin Das, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Shiv Verma, Bhagwati Charan Vohra and Jaidev Kapur, had been enthusiastic participants in the non-violent Non-Cooperation Movement.⁶

Besides, the above mentioned influences Bhagat Singh was deeply impressed by the success of the Bolshevik Revolution and the tactics of the Sein Fein Movement of Ireland. These developed his cognitive and critical faculties and also inspired him to valorous actions. Thus, it is evident from the above mentioned facts that Bhagat Singh inherited nationalism which flourished in the political environment of his family, the province and the events which took place in and out side the country.

In 1924, Bhagat Singh left his studies due to his proposed marriage. He, instead of fulfilling the desire of his grandmother i.e., getting married, was more concerned with the troubles of *Bharat Mata* - 'the mother of 33 crore Indians'. But the reason for leaving studies and Lahore was not restricted to escape the bonds of marriage. It can only be said to be an immediate cause of

4. Bhupinder Hooja, *A Martyr's Notebook*, Indian Book Chronicle, 1994, p. 27.

5. G.S. Deol, *Shaheed Bhagat Singh*, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 1969.

6. M.M. Junija, *Selected Collections on Bhagat Singh*, Modern Publishers, Hisar, 2007, pp. 180-181.

it. The real purpose was to join in the revolutionary activities. This is evident from the fact that while leaving the college, he got an introductory letter from his teacher, Jai Chand Vidyalkar, and he reached straight to Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi.⁷

Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi was a great patriot, who ran the *Pratap Press* at Kanpur. There Bhagat Singh was renamed as Balwant Singh and was given a job in the press. While working there, he got opportunities to meet the revolutionary leaders. He joined the Hindustan Republican Association founded by revolutionaries of United Province. The purpose of this organisation was to establish a Federal Republic of United States of India by an organised and armed revolution. In order to prepare the people for an armed revolution, he used to write and distribute leaflets containing revolutionary ideas. This work was done on the occasions of *melas* or festivals, the self-assembled congregations which saved him from the trouble of getting people together. Once, while distributing the leaflets, the police arrived, Bhagat Singh escaped but his two comrades were arrested. Bhagat Singh managed to free them by playing a ruse. While being chased by the police, he even fired pistol shots in the air.⁸

Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was convinced, if given an opportunity to work with the students, Bhagat Singh would lead them to the path of revolution. Keeping this view, the former used his influence to get the latter appointed as Headmaster of National School, Shadipur, in Aligarh District. Bhagat Singh had to leave for Lahore in early 1925, to attend his ailing grandmother. But this did not stop his political activities. In 1925, he left for Kanpur, to assist the escape of his comrades of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association who were convicted in Kakori Dacoitary case. But the efforts were neutralized by the government, as the latter got the information of the plan of the revolutionaries.⁹

In 1925, Jaito Morcha was launched by Akalis to protest against deposition of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha because the latter had sympathy with the former who had provided help to the Akalis. According to the wishes of his father, Bhagat Singh along with his co-villagers arranged reception of the Jatha which was to proceed through his village. This was considered as an act of hostility towards the government. As such, warrants

7. G.S. Deol, *Shaheed Bhagat Singh*, op. cit., p. 18.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

9. Swaran Singh, *Path of Revolution- A Biography of Shaheed Bhagat Singh*, op. cit., pp. 26-27.

of his arrest were issued. In order to escape arrest in this connection, he moved to Lahore and from there he reached Delhi. Due to a letter or recommendation from his teacher Jai Chandra Vidyalankar, he got a job in a Daily, *Vir Arjun*. He worked here for about 6 months, till the withdrawal of Akali movement.¹⁰

Bhagat Singh established contacts with Kirti Kisan Party founded by Sohan Singh Josh. In March 1926, he founded *Bharat Naujawan Sabha* at Lahore. Comrade Ram Krishan was the first President of the *Sabha* and Bhagat Singh himself was its first secretary. The chief objective of the *Sabha* was to mobilize youth power against the British government by making people aware of the misdeeds of the former. Addressing his comrades, Bhagat Singh said:

Comrades, time has come for us to uproot the foundations of the foreign government. We have to put an end to the naked dance of hunger and unemployment in our land.... As heroes like Maharana Pratap, Chhatrapati Shivaji and Hari Singh Nalwa had shed their blood in the past at the altar of the motherland, so does our motherland demand the sacrifice of youth today. Come forward, be brave souls, to answer the agonizing calls of your mother."¹¹

According to Balabhadra Bharti, upto this time, Bhagat Singh had become a noted activist in the British records.¹² Bhagat Singh along with his comrades, participated in Conference held at Amritsar on 11, 12 and 13 April 1928, to commemorate the martyrs who were massacred in the *Jallianwala Bagh* shooting. There, his *Bharat Naujawan Sabha* was recognized and a suffix i.e., Punjab was added in its name. Under the leadership of Bhagat Singh, the *Bharat Naujawan Sabha* Punjab started organizing students. During the 'Students Week' in June 1928, he organized the 'Lahore Students Union' with a purpose of recruiting revolutionaries. Soon it became auxiliary of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha. Its secret section started working for the achievement of its goal. The British government, in order to suppress the nationalist activities, placed a ban on the organization.¹³

On 8th September 1928, a meeting of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association was convened, at Kotla Feroz Shah, Delhi. In this meeting, decision was taken to boycott the Simon Commission on its arrival in India.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

11. Bhupinder Hooja, *A Martyr's Notebook*, op. cit., p. xiii.

12. G.S. Deol, *Shaheed Bhagat Singh*, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

13. *Home Department*, File No. 192, 1929, p. 54.

Bomb making centres were decided in the said meeting. Besides, the killing of informer of Kakori Dacoity case and the issue of release of Jogesh Chandra Chatterji from the jail was also discussed. The Association was organized on military lines and under this a new cell, 'Hindustan Socialist Republican Army' was created. Thus, the role of Bhagat Singh in *Naujawan Bharat Sabha* and the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association indicates two things. First, he had immense faith in the youth. In his opinion their promptness to suffer, daring courage and radiant sacrifice prove that India's future in their hands would perfectly be safe. Secondly, he had formulated a well defined ideology and strategy before the death of Lala Lajpat Rai.

In 1928, the Simon Commission arrived India, to assess India's competence for greater association in the local administration and to make recommendations for further legislative reforms. The Commission did not have any Indian member, so Indians decided to boycott it. On this occasion an All Parties Procession raising the slogan, 'Simon go back', was led by Lala Lajpat Rai. The Senior Superintendent Police J.A. Scott not only ordered *lathi* charge on the procession but himself started beating Lala Lajpat Rai mercilessly. Consequently, the latter succumbed to his injuries. The Hindustan Socialist Army, which in collaboration with Indian National Congress, took leading part in preparing the people of Punjab to boycott the Simon Commission, had to kill Saunders, a police officer involved in the *lathi* charge.

The death of Lala Lajpat Rai was a personal loss to Bhagat Singh, as he had spent much time in his company. But, it was not the only cause of Saunders' assassination there were some other reasons also. Firstly, the murder of a leader respected by millions of people at the unworthy hands of an ordinary police official was considered to be an insult to the nation. Secondly, about the humiliating atmosphere created by the British officials after the *lathi* charge, Dr. Stayapal who was present there, describing the scornful atmosphere wrote:

Some other Government officials visited the spot but instead of making amends, they jeered at us. They scoffed and howled at us. They mocked and ridiculed, they laughed and indulged in all sorts of abuses and vituperation.... When we shouted that the assailed person was Lalaji, a revered leader, a member of the Central Assembly and whom public held in high esteem, they paid no heed to our shouts and drove us and heaped further *lathis* on our heads.¹⁴

14. K.L. Johar: *Martyr Bhagat Singh- An Intimate View*, Sneh Prakashan, Yamuna Nagar, p. 182.

Thirdly, a question regarding the death of Lala Lajpat Rai was raised by Colonel Wedgwood in the House of Commons on 26th November 1928. Replying the question Under Secretary of State for India, Earl Winterlon said, "No evidence had been produced to show the death of Lala Lajpat Rai was due to blows received on that occasion."¹⁵ But Bhagat Singh and his comrades knew the reality as they were also present there.

Fourthly, the British government, after conducting two inquiries in this matter, one by department and the other by the Commissioner of Rawalpindi, gave a clean chit to Mr. Scott. But the Indians were not satisfied with these inquiries, because they witnessed all that had taken place. Therefore, they demanded a judicial inquiry in this matter and also apology from the government. However, both these demands were rejected by the latter. Fifthly, to add fuel to the fire, the Under Secretary of State for India, instead of tendering apology, justified the use of force. He stated in the House of Commons: "No government, when it has been found necessary to use force to restrain crowds, is justified in making apologies to particular individuals or to any relations of any particular individual!"¹⁶

Fifthly, it was declared by Nehru that some concrete steps would be planned in the next Congress Session. But the members of Hindustan Socialist Republican Association were apprehensive that the Congress would not take any effective action in this regard. Had the Congress taken any decision immediately to restore national respect, the course of action adopted by Bhagat Singh and his comrades would have been different. Lastly, they had before them, the example of Bengal where due the killings of some officers by the revolutionaries, terror stricken Britishers started sending their families to England.¹⁷

To conclude with, it can be said that Saunders was killed not only to avenge the death of Lala Lajpat Rai as an individual, but, to avenge the death of a National leader of India; death of a representative of India in the Central Assembly; use of violence on non-violent procession; suppression of demand for representation in the commission which was constituted for the reforms in India; suppression of legitimate demands of the people; derogatory remarks and arrogant behaviour of the bureaucracy and irresponsible statements of alien government in the House of Commons.

15. *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Vol. 223, No. 15, Monday, the 26th November, 1928, p. 6.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

17. Bhupinder Hooja, *A Martyr's Notebook*, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

The purpose of Bhagat Singh's life was not only to take revenge or unnecessary bloodshed, but he had a definite ideology. His political thought evolved gradually from Gandhian nationalism to revolutionary Marxism. He envisaged independent and socialist India. He was pained to see the prevailing inequality and injustice in the society. It is evident from his statement given in the court on 6th June 1929:

Producers or labourers in spite of being the most necessary element of society, are robbed by their exploiters of the fruits of their labour and deprived of their elementary rights. The peasant who grows corn for all, starves with the family, the weaver who supplies the world market with textile fabrics, has not enough to cover his own and his children's bodies, masons, smiths and carpenter who raise magnificent palaces, live like pariahs in the slums. The capitalists and exploiters, the parasites of society, squander millions on their whims. These terrible inequalities and forced disparity of chances are bound to lead to chaos. This state of affair cannot last long.¹⁸

Bhagat Singh emphasised on the need for reorganisation of society on socialistic basis i.e., where there would be neither exploitation of man by man, nor of nation by nation. Unless this was done sufferings and carnage which threatened humanity could not be avoided. All talks of ending war and ushering in an era of universal peace would be useless. Therefore, he cherished a desire to establish an order of society in which the sovereignty of the proletariat would be recognized and a world federation would redeem humanity from the bondage of capitalism and misery of imperial wars.¹⁹

Bhagat Singh asserted that revolution is an unalienable right of mankind. By revolution he meant the spirit, the longing for a change for the better. Therefore, he advocated a socialist revolution, the indispensable preliminary to which was a political revolution. In his address to young political workers regarding Revolutionary Party and its Programme, he said:

For that purpose, our immediate aim is achievement of power.

As a matter of fact, the state, the government machinery is just a weapon in the hands of the ruling class to further and

18. *Statement of Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt in The Assembly Bomb case*, read in the Court on 6th June, 1929, by Mr. Asaf Ali on behalf of Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt.

19. "What Should A Revolutionary Party And Its Programme Be Like?" quoted by K.C. Yadav and Babar Singh, *The Fragrance of Freedom Writings of Bhagat Singh*, Hope India, Delhi, 2006, p. 56.

safeguard its interests. We want to snatch and handle it to utilize it for our ideal, i.e., the social reconstruction on new, i.e., Marxist, basis. For this purpose we are fighting to handle the government machinery.²⁰

In political field, he was a champion of complete independence. He sought no compromise between independence and slavery i.e., Dominion Status. He spurned Dominion Status which had been the goal of Indian National Congress at one stage. In his view freedom was an imperishable birth right of all. He was not satisfied with the existing political system in India in which the government was not responsible to the people and the legislatures were powerless. The Viceroy, who possessed the power of veto, rendered all the efforts of the elected members futile. Therefore, he wanted that the executive should be elected by the members of the Assembly, and should not be imposed from the above by the Governor. Further, in his view, unicameral legislature was the only 'best system for India. The second or Upper Chamber of Legislature was the symbol of bourgeois superstition, therefore it should be abolished. Bhagat Singh was a staunch supporter of right to equality. Hence, he was against imposing limitations on the right to vote on the basis of property and gender. Ahead of his time, he favoured introduction of universal suffrage.²¹

Bhagat Singh was supporter of federal system in India with autonomous states. However, he was not satisfied with the provincial autonomy, as it was introduced in India, under the Government of India Act, 1919, under which, the government rather than being elected by the people, was imposed from the above. Not only this, it was equipped with extraordinary powers, higher and above the legislature. Therefore, he termed it as 'provincial tyranny' instead of autonomy.²²

As a progressive intellectual, Bhagat Singh advocated the urgent need of detaching religion from politics so that India would learn to be rational by adopting scientific thinking. Therefore, while drafting the rules of *Naujawan Bharat Sabha*, he emphasised that the members of the *Sabha* should create the spirit of toleration among the people, considering religion as a matter of personal belief of a man. Not only this, the members should have nothing to do with communal bodies or other parties which disseminate communal ideas.²³ Due to his secular ideas, he even did not spare Lala Lajpat Rai, when

20. *Statement of Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt in the Assembly Bomb Case.*

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

22. M.M. Junija, *Selected Collections on Bhagat Singh, op.cit.*, pp. 186-187.

23. *Ibid.*

during the last days of his life the latter turned to communal politics. He clearly understood the danger that communalism posed to the nation and national politics. In his view, communalism was a big enemy as was colonialism, therefore, should be fought with all might.²⁴

To achieve the above mentioned objectives, Bhagat Singh adopted both, violent as well as non-violent methods. Because he believed that ends justify the means. This is evident from the statement which he gave before the Lahore High Court Bench:

No one can do justice to anybody without taking his motive into consideration. If we ignore the motive, the biggest generals of world will appear like ordinary murders, revenue officers will look like thieves and cheats. Even judges will be accused of murder.²⁵

Bhagat Singh advocated that violence was justified if it was used for a noble or righteous cause i.e., to protect the weak, the poor and for the honour of the country. In this regard he drew inspiration from Guru Gobind Singh, Shivaji and Maharana Pratap. He was against unnecessary bloodshed, sanguinary strife or individual vendetta. Therefore, in the meeting of Hindustan Socialist Republican Association in 1928, he floated the idea that they should not fritter time and energy in killing petty officials or informers. He resorted to violent methods for serving the following purposes. First, to create public opinion against the government by using courts as platforms after being arrested in order to awaken the masses. Second, to compel the insensitive bureaucrats to realize that Indians need freedom.

To suppress the National Movement and Trade Union Movement, the government of India sought to acquire more powers by passing Public Safety Bill and Trade Disputes Bill. On 18th April 1929, the Viceroy's proclamation' enacting the two Bills, was to be made, despite the fact that the majority of members were opposed to it, and rather had rejected it earlier. Therefore, Bhagat Singh and his comrades, considered it to be undemocratic, and unjust. They decided to register their protest against this measure by throwing bombs in the Central Assembly, when the decision on it was to be announced. The purpose of it was not to harm any body. This is evident from the fact that the bombs were thrown on the empty benches, which resulted in slight abrasions in less than half a dozen cases. These bombs were not powerful at all. Had

24. *Bhagat Singh's Statement Before The Lahore High Court Bench.*

25. *To Make The Deaf Hear: A Notice by The Hindustan Socialist Republican Association.*

they been loaded with some high explosives they would have sufficed to wipe out a majority of the members of the Assembly. Moreover, they were aware of the strength of the bombs otherwise, there was no question of throwing them in the presence of their respected national leaders and risking their lives. Further, they could have ambushed Sir John Simon who was sitting in the Presidents gallery. Besides, instead of fleeing away from the spot, they scattered the leaflets entitled: *To Make The Deaf Hear*, which read:

Let the representatives of the people return to their constituencies and prepare the masses for the coming revolution. And let the government know that, while protesting against the Public Safety and the Trades Disputes Bill and the callous murder of Lala Lajpat Rai on behalf of the helpless Indian masses, we want to emphasise the lesson often repeated by the history that it is easy to kill the individuals, but you cannot kill the ideas. Great empires crumbled but the ideas survived. Bourbons and Czars fell while the revolution marched ahead triumphantly.²⁶

Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt owned their responsibility, and offered themselves to be arrested. The motive of the said action was made clear in the statement, read in the court by Asaf Ali on behalf of Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt:

Our practical protest was against the institution, which since its birth, has eminently helped to display only its worthlessness but its far-reaching power for mischief. The more we have pondered, the more deeply we have been convinced that it exists only to demonstrate to world India's humiliation and helplessness and it symbolizes the overriding domination of an irresponsible and autocrat rule.²⁷

It was the considered opinion of Bhagat Singh that individual killing and bombs could not serve their ultimate purpose. These actions had their political significance, as far as they served to create mentality and an atmosphere which was necessary to the final struggle. Such actions were to win the moral support of the people and were designated as the propaganda through deed. This technique was expounded by Bakunin and later on developed by Kropotkin. It also formed a part of the strategy of Bhagat Singh and his

26. *Statement of Bhagat Singh And B.K. Dutt In The Assembly Bomb Case.*

27. *Ibid.*

comrades. However, the idea of self- sacrifice remained their first priority. This view is confirmed from Hari Kishan's case, who was convicted for firing at the Governor of Punjab on 23rd December 1930. The Governor survived the attack but a Sub-inspector was killed. In the opinion of Bhagat Singh, the lawyer should not have stated in the court that the accused did not intend to kill the Governor. Because by saying so, he spoiled the purpose of not only the particular action but also of the movement. The wisdom of the lawyer depended on his interpretation of the cause of Sub-inspector's death.

Similarly, on another occasion one of Bhagat Singh's comrades was prosecuted for having delivered a socialist speech. The former was astounded when the latter pleaded not guilty of the charge. In the opinion of Bhagat Singh, the occasion should have been utilized by raising the demand for right to speech.

In his own case, when he came to know that his father had submitted a petition to the members of the Special Tribunal in connection with his defence, he condemned the measure. Not only this, when some of the prisoners wanted to save him from the gallows, he rejected their idea. He believed that if he mounted the gallows fearlessly, it would inspire Indian mothers and they would aspire their children to be like him. Thus, the number of persons to sacrifice their lives for the liberation of the country would increase.

During his confinement in the Lahore Conspiracy Case, Bhagat Singh raised his voice against the mal-treatment meted out to the prisoners. He undertook hunger strike in jail on 15 June, 1929 and succeeded in obtaining better facilities for the prisoners. This shows that he adopted the methods as the situation demanded.

In conclusion, it can be said that the intellectual development of Bhagat Singh was considerably influenced by the cultural heritage of Punjab. He contributed to the growth of new political culture which was secular and nationalist in nature with a pronounced social stance. His ideals were high and his sacrifice was great.

COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE: A STUDY OF COTTON CULTIVATION IN COLONIAL PUNJAB*

Gopal Parshad**

Commercialization of agriculture means cash crops grown for market. Commercialization of agriculture in India started on a large scale during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Indian economy became the integral part of the world market in which India emerged as a major exporter of cash crops - especially raw cotton. This development was stimulated by the land revenue policies of the colonial government which forced the peasants to cultivate cash crops, and by the outbreak of the American civil war, which stopped the export of raw cotton of the United States in England. Moreover, development of the means of transportation also helped commercialization of agriculture.

During pre-colonial rule, agriculture remained the chief source of income as well as livelihood of the rural society. Most of the peasants grew traditional crops such as wheat, millets, pulses etc. The Mughal Emperors and nobles took interest in trade also. However, they not only encouraged the peasants to grow cash crops like cotton, but also provided them with irrigation facilities, *takkavi* loans as well as safety on land and river routes.¹

During this regime, various trading centres like those of Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Multan etc. were also expanded, which created market for cash crops.²

Besides, demand of land revenue and rent in cash from the peasants was the general trend in India before the advent of the British rule.³ On the

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1. Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556-1707* (Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, Reprint), pp. 24-39.
2. Satish Chandra, *Essays on Medieval Indian History* (Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2003), pp. 237-46.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 86; Tapan Ray Chaudhuri, "The mid-eighteenth-century background", in Dharma Kumar (ed), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol.11 (Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2005, Reprint), p. 15.

other hand, during the Mughal period, prices of cash crops were very high in comparison to those of food-grains. The urgent need for cash to pay land revenue and keep themselves (peasants) alive forced them to sell their crop as soon as possible. It seems that some peasants started growing cash crops such as cotton, sugarcane, indigo and tobacco to make profit. In other words, commercialization of agriculture started at a slow pace.⁴ But it is true that small peasants did not grow cash crops for market. In fact, the cultivation of cash crops needed higher investment.⁵

The colonial rule was established in Bengal and south India during the second half of the eighteenth century. However, the colonial rule brought in its train both negative and positive aspects in India. In the negative aspects, the colonizers not only colonized Indian economy, but also demanded land revenue in cash only. The demand of land revenue was very high. The main motive of the revenue policies of the British was to collect more and more money from India. This jeopardized the future as well as fate of agrarian strata. In fact, small peasants had two options - either they borrowed money from the money-lenders and Zamindars, or they cultivated cash crops in their fields. However, they always went for the first option. It was because getting loan was much easier for them. Besides, due to the industrialization in England, the demand for raw material increased in India.⁶ The middlemen started giving advance money to the peasants to cultivate cash crops in their fields. In fact, colonizers subordinated Indian economy in such a way that the peasants were entrapped in debt.⁷

The positive sides of the colonial rule were the development of the means of communication like rail and road as well as improvement of irrigation

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4. K. L. Tuteja, "Agricultural Technology in Gujarat: A Study of Exotic Seeds and Saw Gin, 1800- 50", *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol. XVII, No. 1-2, (1990-91), pp. 136-151.
 5. *Ibid.*
 6. Between 1901-02 the total value imports (All machine made goods) and exports (raw material) of the Punjab was 1548 lakh rupees and 1551 lakh rupees which increased up to 3001 lakh rupees and 2763 lakh rupees in 1911-12 respectively. Report on the Administration of Punjab and its Dependences, 1911-12, p. 124; Satish Chandra Mishra, "Commercialization, Peasants Differentiation and Merchant Capital in Late Nineteenth Century Bombay and Punjab" in *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 10, October 1982, pp. 3-51.
 7. Mridula Mukherjee, "Commercialization and Agrarian Change in Pre-Independence Punjab", in K. N. Raj, Neeladri Bhattacharya, Sumit Guha and Sakti Padhi, (eds.), *Essays on the Commercialization of Indian Agriculture* (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1985), p. 57.

system by constructing canals, tube-wells and lift system to draw canal water.⁸ All these facilities developed Indian agriculture. It is true, colonial rulers made all economic policies in their own interests, but Indians also benefited from them. Due to the development of rail and road transportation, villages came closer to world market.⁹ The demand of cash crops increased. The big peasants took recourse to producing cash crops in place of traditional crops, which led to commercialization of agriculture. Some nationalist historians like R. C. Dutt argues that the commercialization of agriculture was due to the demand of land revenue in cash as well as meeting the demand of raw material for British industry. In other words, he says that it was forced commercialization.¹⁰ K. N. Raj mentions: "....though the need to pay land revenue in cash was the initial compelling force for the marketing of agricultural produce, the large surpluses so extracted from agriculture, without a flow of goods and services in the reverse direction in exchange, was basically an impediment to further commercialization...."¹¹

However, Sumit Sarkar differs with this argument. He writes: ".... Orthodox economics tends to associate commercialization with the development of agricultural surpluses and rural prosperity; one might also expect tendencies towards capitalist farming through a differentiation among the peasantry which would certainly mean suffering for the poorer sections, but also growth in productivity. Yet here, as elsewhere, colonialism had a twisted logic of its own, for commercialization emerges on analysis to have been often an artificial and forced process which led to differentiation without genuine growth."¹²

The colonial rulers introduced various types of land revenue systems like, *Permanent Settlement*, *Rayotwari* system and *Mahalwari* system in different parts of the country. The demand rate of land revenue was very

8. Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1989), pp. 207 and 218-22.

9. John M. Hurd, "Railways", in Dharma Kumar (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. II*, (Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2005, Reprint), p. 747.

10. See for Detailed Study R. C. Dutt, *The Economic History of India, Vol. II* (Two Vols. Bound in One), (Low Price Publication, New Delhi 1990, Reprint), pp. 260-61.

11. K. N. Raj, "Introduction" in K. N. Raj, Neeladri Bhattacharya, Sumit Guha and Sakti Padhi, (eds.), *Essays on the Commercialization of Indian Agriculture* (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1985, p. viii.

12. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885-1947* (Macmillan India Ltd., Madras, 1985, Reprint), p. 30.

high.¹³ The peasants had to borrow money from the moneylenders to pay land revenue. Thus they found themselves deeply and persistently in debt. On the other hand, the demand to pay revenue in cash had been enforced upon peasants all over India to cultivate cash crops in place of food-grains. Tirthankar Roy says that land revenue was not the cause of commercialization.¹⁴ After 1860, the peasants started producing cash crops primarily because they were more profitable.¹⁵ He argues: "After 1860, that is, in the second and bigger phase of commercialization, the revenue burden as an influence on crop choices became increasingly weak, and the profit motive stronger...."¹⁶

Morris D. Morris argues: "...The improvement of internal transport and public order and the growth of foreign as well as domestic markets encouraged regional specialization of production which should have yielded higher average output per acre. And, finally, there was the shift from lower to higher-value crops in many areas of the country...."¹⁷ But Bipan Chandra differs with Morris D. Morris. He deftly remarks that commercialization need not introduce higher technology. It may just lead to shifting of good land from traditional crops to commercial crops. Britishers did not introduce new technology like that of England in agriculture. In fact, commercialization did not promote capitalist agriculture. Commercialization in India merely meant producing cash crops for markets. However, peasants were not benefited from so-called commercialization. All profit of cash crops filled the coffers only of the colonial government, landlords and money-lenders. In fact, the peasant found him in deeper debt.¹⁸ Thus the commercialization of agriculture has remained the issue of debate and deliberation.

The commercialization of agriculture in different parts of India during colonial rule has been seriously probed in the last few decades. But no

13. Surendra J. Patel, *Agricultural Labourers in Modern India and Pakistan*, (Current Book House, Bombay, 1952), pp. 48-63.

14. Tirthankar Roy, *The Economic History of India, 1857-1947* (Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2000), p. 92.

15. *Ibid*

16. *Ibid*.

17. Morris D. Morris, "Towards A Re-Interpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History", in Morris D Morris, Toru Matsui, Bipan Chandra and T. Raychaudhuri, *Indian Economy in the Nineteenth Century: A Symposium*, (Indian Economic and Social History Association, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi, 1969), p. 8.

18. Bipan Chandra, "Re Interpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History" in Morris D. Morris, Toru Matsui, Bipan Chandra and T. Raychaudhuri, *Indian Economy in the Nineteenth Century: A Symposium*, pp. 50-51.

comprehensive study dealing with commercialization of agriculture and cotton cultivation in colonial Punjab has so far been undertaken. True, there is substance in the view expressed by some scholars that forced commercialization was due to revenue policies of the colonial government and introduction of means of communication. On the other side, the commercialization of agriculture varied from place to place. In the regions of the country like those of Punjab, where colonial rule established much later (in 1849), the impact of commercialization was less than what it was in the other provinces like Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Gujarat. In fact, it was the historical process (continuity and change) in the field of agriculture to shift from traditional crops to commercial crops like cotton. The colonial government also made some efforts to improve arid land of Punjab by constructing canal colonies. It is in this context that this paper is being presented as an attempt to assess the impact of commercialization and cotton cultivation in Punjab.

Cotton has continued to be produced in Punjab since ancient times. During pre-colonial rule, Mughal Emperors encouraged the cultivators to cultivate cotton crops. Irfan Habib indicates some features of production system during Mughal regime such as the different size of land holdings (large and small) and the cultivation of cash crops like cotton as they required a higher investment.¹⁹ In fact, rich peasants started cultivating cotton on a large scale. Most of the raw cotton was consumed by the local artisans or by traditional handicraft industry.²⁰ In spite of this, small quantities of raw cotton and cotton threads were exported to Persian Gulf, the Red Sea ports and occasionally to Europe. In the eighteenth century, Bengal was the chief centre of cotton cultivation. In the next century, Gujarat, Khandesh, Berar, Bombay and Madras emerged as more important centres for cotton cultivation.²¹ In Punjab cotton gradually became the region's principal crop during the colonial rule.

Besides, during the colonial rule some administrative and technological changes took place in agriculture. Land revenue remained the chief source of income of the state till the end of the British rule in 1947. The British rulers

19. For detailed study see, Irfan Habib, "The System of Agricultural Production: Mughal India" and "Agrarian Relation and Land Revenue: North India", in Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. I (Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1982).

20. K. L. Tuteja, "Agricultural Technology in Gujarat: A Study of Exotic Seeds and Saw Gin, 1800-50" pp. 136-151.

21. *Ibid.*; Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System of Mughal India*, pp. 41 and 74.

introduced village system or *mahalwari* system to assess and collect land revenue in the colonial Punjab.²² Under this system, one-sixth of the total produce was demanded as the land revenue in the settlements of Lahore and Amritsar districts as calculated between 1860 and 1872. By the subsequent rules framed under the Land Revenue Act of 1871, the British government demanded one-half of the actual rent paid by the ordinary tenants at will in a year. For the collection of revenue, the whole Punjab was divided into 29 districts under a deputy commissioner. Other revenue officers like tehsildars, collectors, etc. were appointed in every district.²³ The land owners in Punjab were the large landholders, middle landholders etc. J. S. Grewal mentions: "Much more numerous than the large and middling landholders were the owners of small holdings and tenants. While the large and middling landholders could give land for cultivation to tenants, many of the small landholders had to take up land for cultivation as tenants. The marked increase in the number of tenants under colonial rule in Punjab was due both to fragmentation of holdings and to the fact that many an owner of land was becoming a tenant on his own land. The majority of those who lost their lands to moneylenders and buyers were the small landholders who, though less indebted than the large or middling landholders, got more deeply into debt and were forced to part with their land."²⁴ Therefore, during 1926-27, the average size of landholdings in entire Punjab was 6.7 acres. But in canal colonies, the average of landholdings was 22.5 acres which reduced up to 9.8 acres in 1926-27.²⁵

After the establishment of British rule in Punjab in 1849, the colonial government developed the means of communication like rail, road, and telegraph.²⁶ In fact, especially due to the introduction of railways, the villages of Punjab came closer to cities and towns. Now villagers started selling their

22. R. C. Dutt, *Economic History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 67-72.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

24. J.S. Grewal, "Agrarian Production and Colonial Policy in Punjab", in Mushirul Hassan and Narayani Gupta (eds.) *India's Colonial Encounter: Essays in Memory of Eric Stokes* (Manohar, Delhi, 2004), p. 367.

25. Eshya Mujahid-Mukhtar, "The History of the Agricultural Development and the Role of Policy: A Comparison of Two Punjab (1849-1981)", *The Indian Economic Journal*, Vol. 38, (April-June, 1991), p. 47.

26. Narayani Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires 1803-1931*, (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1981), p. 42; Dharma Kumar (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. II, p. 739; B.S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab 1901-1939* (Ess Ess Publication, Delhi, 1975), pp 299 and 310-312; Harish C. Sharma, *Artisans of the Punjab: A Study of Social Change in Historical Perspective, 1849-1947* (Manohar Publishers and Distributors, Delhi, 1996), pp. 68-70.

crops in urban markets on cash payments. However, cash flowed in villages, which led to doing away with the old *jajmani* arrangement at a slow pace.²⁷ At the same time, industrial revolution took place in England which increased the demand of raw cotton in India as well as in Punjab. For over a century, Lancashire cotton textile industry depended on American raw cotton. But due to civil war and the industrial revolution in America, the supply of raw cotton stopped. However, Britishers started importing raw cotton from India.²⁸ R. C. Dutt writes: "America sent little cotton during that war; and the export from India rose to near thirty-six millions in 1864 and to a higher figure in the following years."²⁹

Cotton cultivation in Punjab was not an easy vocation for the peasants. Cotton crop faced competition with other crops. H. G. Trevaskis writes: "...In Punjab cotton is grown wherever irrigation is possible excepting in the montane (mountain) and submontane (sub-mountain) areas. Four-fifths of the crop is normally irrigated, and it is only in the extreme south-east of the province that a moderate yield is sometimes obtained with irrigation. The season in the Punjab is much shorter than in other provinces on account of the cold weather, and unless the crop is shown early with the help of irrigation water, it can never yield well. ..."³⁰

The land of Punjab, except some very lightest soil, was conducive to cotton cultivation. The season of sowing cotton in Punjab was much shorter than it was in other provinces, such as Gujarat and Bengal, of the country. The sowing of cotton began in April and continued till the month of June.³¹

27. The word of '*Jajmani*' originally referred to the client for whom the *Brahmin* priest performed rituals. It is now generally used to refer to the patron or the recipient or specialized services. It is also mutual obligation for work and payment between the land owners and artisans. William Wiser, *The Hindu Jajmani System* (Lucknow Publishing House, Lucknow, 1958), p. xxii; Peter Mayer, "Investing Village Tradition: The Late 19th Century Origin of North Indian Jajmani System," *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 2, (1993), pp. 357-395; Harish C. Sharma, *Artisans of the Punjab*, p. 28.

28. H.G.Trevaskis, *An Economic History of Punjab, 1890-1925*, Vol. II (Vintage Books, Gurgaon, 1989, Reprint), pp. 336-37; B. M. Bhatia, "Agriculture and Co-operation", in V. B. Singh, (ed.), *Economic History of India: 1857-1956* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1965), p. 123; Peter Harnetty, "Cotton Export and Indian Agriculture 1861-1870", *The Economic History Review*, Vol. XXIV, no. 3 (Aug. 1971), pp. 414-29.

29. R. C. Dutt, *Economic History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 121-22.

30. H.G.Trevaskis, *An Economic History of Punjab, 1890-1925*, Vol. II, p. 337.

31. *Ibid*, pp. 337-38; K. L. Tuteja, "Agricultural Technology in Gujarat: A Study of Exotic Seeds and Saw Gins 1800-50," *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol. XVII, No. 1-2 (1990-91), pp. 136-151.

The seeds were either scattered or dropped behind the plough. American cotton was also grown in colonial Punjab.³² Before sowing American cotton in lines, the land was ploughed two or three times. Most of the peasants lacked seeds. They depended upon village *Bania* or moneylender for the supply of cotton seeds.³³ Cotton-picking began in September. The process of cotton-picking was clumsy, often producing dirty cotton with reduced market value. In many areas, cotton was cleaned by hands.³⁴ A woman could clean by hand about a pound of cotton fibre per day.³⁵

Cotton was cleaned by machines also. George Watt mentions two types of cotton-cleaning machines, which were called '*pauvatna*' (foot-roller) and '*charkha*'. Foot-roller was best used for hard seeded Indian cotton. It was simply an iron rod which was thick in the centre and tapering towards the extremities. It was rolled by wooden soled-feet over a smooth flat stone. It was generally driven by women and children.³⁶ By using this machine, a woman could clean four to six pounds of cotton per day.³⁷

Other cotton cleaning machine was called *charkha* which consisted of two rollers (either wood or iron). It also separated seeds from fibre. This machine could clean six to eight pounds of cotton per day.³⁸ In fact, it was not superior to foot-roller in its working.³⁹

32. American cotton was long stapled. American seeds took in Punjab in 1903. These seeds were mixed up with native seeds. An improved variety of cotton was developed at Lyallpur Agriculture College. The distribution of improved seeds started in 1913. The length of the staple of 4 F was about 7/8 inch. Other varieties of cotton such as 285 F and 289 F were also developed in Punjab. See Trevaskis, *An Economic History of Punjab*, Vol. II, p. 339.

33. J.A. Voelcker, *Report On the Improvement of Indian Agriculture*, 2nd edn. (Government Press Calcutta, 1897), p. 237.

34. George Watt, *A Dictionary of Economic Products in India*, Vol. IV (Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1886), p. 142.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 152-53.

36. K. L. Tuteja, "Agricultural Technology in Gujarat: A Study of Exotic Seeds and Saw Gins 1800-50", p. 139; George Watt, *A Dictionary of Economic Products in India*, Vol. IV, pp. 152-53; H. Baden Powell mentions that there were two kinds of cotton cleaning machines such as '*Belana*' and '*Pinjan*'. For detailed study see H. Baden Powell, *Handbook of Manufacturers and Arts of the Punjab*, Vol. II (Punjab Printing Company, Lahore, 1872), p. 1.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*

39. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya mentions, "It turned out cotton wool in a matted state with the fiber lying confused in different directions, causing trouble to the carders". See Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, "Innovation and Economic Development," *The Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. III, No. 3, 1966, p. 149, fn. 7.

Colonial government encouraged the peasants to grow cotton in their fields. During 1886-1926, canal colonies such as Sidhnai, Sohag Para, Chunian, Chenab, Jhelum, Lower Bari Doab, Upper Doab, Upper Chenab, Upper Jhelum and Nili Bar were constructed in western Punjab.⁴⁰ In this region, owing to the insufficiency of rainfall, agriculture depended on irrigation. So, colonial government provided water by constructing canal colonies to irrigate arid region of western Punjab. Between 1885-1947 the total irrigated area including princely states increased from 3,000,000 acres to 14,000,000 acres.⁴¹ However, the yield and acreage of commercial crops like cotton increased in Punjab. In 1879-80 the total cotton cultivated area was 806,380 acres which decreased 761,729 acres in 1880-81 and further it increased again up to 918,265 acres in 1881-82, and then declined to 898,818 acres in 1882-83. This increase and decrease was due to the failure of crops.⁴² In fact, the general trend was to increase the yield and acreage of cotton cultivation in colonial Punjab. The average output was 722,724 cwts. or 1,011,815 maunds per year. About 137,384 maunds of cotton were exported annually.⁴³ During 1910-1940, in Chenab colony, the cultivated area was increased by roughly 50 percent. A similar increase occurred in other areas of Punjab.⁴⁴ A. Latifi writes: "The Punjab annually raises about 15½ lacs of maunds of clean cotton, or 7 percent of produce of all India, and of this 11½ lacs are exported. Most of it is ginned in the numerous factories scattered over the cotton districts..."⁴⁵ A large number of modern cotton ginning and processes factories were also established in colonial Punjab.⁴⁶ At the same time the British demand of raw cotton increased which motivated the peasants to grow more cotton in their fields. A good quantity of raw cotton was purchased by big trading firms, most of which were settled in Karachi.⁴⁷

40. Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, pp.8-9.

41. *Ibid*

42. The output per acre of clean cotton was 644,483 cwts. in 1879-80 which increased 653,917 cwts., 787, 581 cwts. and 804,917 respectively in 1880-81, 1881-82 and 1882-83. See *Monograph on Cotton Manufacture in Punjab 1884*, p. 1.

43. *Ibid*.

44. K.T. Shah, *Industrialisation of The Punjab* (Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1941), p. 62; Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, p.225.

45. A. Latifi, *Industrial Punjab* (Government Printing Press, Lahore, 1911), p. 24.

46. Harish C. Sharma, *Artisans of the Punjab*, p.78.

47. Mridula Mukherjee, "Commercialization and Agrarian Change in Pre-Independence Punjab", pp.62-63.

TABLE-I
COTTON CULTIVATION IN PUNJAB (IN ACRES)

Year	Bombay	Madras	Punjab
1860-61	1,002,196	1,060,558	467,513
1861-62	1,140,434	1,020,184	482,351
1862-63	1,309,484	1,309,234	547,414
1863-64	1,517,321	1,766,312	537,183
1864-65	1,573,447	1,747,501	872,851
1865-66	1,186,097	1,395,697	613,262
1866-67	1,435,183	1,316,944	624,193
1867-68	1,436,735	1,486,861	687,321
1868-69	1,436,613	1,341,365	679,294
1869-70	1,978,711	1,604,028	835,053

These figures (Table I) show that there was a simultaneous increase in cotton cultivation in Punjab. It seems that it was due to American war which stopped the supply of raw cotton to England. The demand of Indian cotton increased during the war period. However, after the civil war, it was followed by dramatic fall in cotton cultivation in 1865-66. It further followed the increase in 1869-70 by high prices for cotton.⁴⁸

Total acreage of cotton cultivation in colonial Punjab was low in comparison to Bombay and Madras. However, the soil conditions were better for cotton cultivation in Bombay, Madras and Gujarat than in Punjab.⁴⁹ In fact, major tracts of cotton cultivation were central Punjab and the region of canal colonies. In these areas, irrigation facilities were available throughout the year which helped to retain moisture in soil. But in coastal areas of the country maximum moisture could be found in soil than Punjab.⁵⁰ It is true, after the opening of Suez canal the foreign trade of Punjab cotton increased, but it was less than the coastal regions like Bombay, Madras and Gujarat.⁵¹

48. Peter Harnetty, "Cotton Export and Indian Agriculture 1861-1870", *The Economic History Review*, pp. 415-16.

49. *Ibid.*; K. L. Tuteja, "Agricultural Technology in Gujarat: A Study of Exotic Seeds and Saw Gins 1800 - 50", pp.136-51.

50. *Ibid.*

51. For detailed study see, K. N. Chaudhuri, "Foreign Trade and Balance of Payment (1757-1947) in Dharma Kumar (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, pp. 804-877.

Table-II
YIELD PER ACRE (in lbs.) FOR COTTON IN PUNJAB⁵²

Year	Yield per Acre
1891-95	81.2
1896-1900	73.6
1901-05	75.8
1906-10	95.6
1911-15	93.2
1916-20	103.2
1921-25	115.6
1926-30	109.2
1931-35	141.0
1936-40	166.6

The cultivation of cotton in Punjab increased over the period 1891-1940 except during the years of 1911-15 and 1926-30. It seems that this decrease in yields per acre was due to First World War as well as to economic depression. However, Mridula Mukherjee argues that the increase in the yield of cotton per acre was due to the transformation of agriculture. But in comparison to other provinces, this increase was not in the real sense. The overall increase in non food-grains during 1891-1940 in colonial Punjab was about 51.8 percent (1.6 percent annually). Madras, on the other hand, showed an increase of about 81.9 percent (1.6 percent annually). In fact, the yield in Bengal was marginally low than it was in Punjab - 45.1 percent (0.9 percent).⁵³ As stated earlier, the yield in cotton cultivation in canal colonies increased roughly by 50 percent. This was due to the development of irrigation facilities as well as supply of improved seeds.⁵⁴ After 1921, according to Blyn, per capita, all crops in Punjab declined at the rate of 0.63 percent per year which rose to 13 percent in 1941. On the other hand, per capita food-crops output declined at the rate of 1 percent per year. The total decline was 18 percent between 1921-41. At the same time, per capita, non food-grain crops output increased, but it did not compensate the decline in food crops output.⁵⁵

52. George Blyn, *Agriculture Trends in India 1891-1947: Out put Availability and Productivity* (Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1966), Appendix Table, 3A and p.232.

53. Mridula Mukherjee, "Commercialization and Agrarian Change in Pre-Independence Punjab" pp. 65-69.

54. Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, p. 225.

55. Mridula Mukherjee, "Commercialization and Agrarian Change in Pre-Independence Punjab", in K. N. Raj, Neeladri Bhattacharya, Sumit Guha and Sakti Padhi (eds.), *Essays on the Commercialization of Indian Agriculture*, p. 65.

The colonial rulers saw Punjab different from the other provinces of India. They wanted to use this primarily agrarian region as a store-house for the supply of raw material for Lancashire cotton textile industry. However, the British government expanded canal irrigation in western Punjab. Government established seed farms in canal colonies.⁵⁶ The arid land was made fertile⁵⁷ Improved varieties of indigenous cotton seeds were distributed to the peasants. During 1912-1913, about 45 maunds of improved cotton seeds of indigenous varieties and 83 maunds of American cotton seeds from Punjab Agriculture College and Research Institute, Lyallpur, were exhibited for sale to the peasants. In 1926, thereafter, 32,100 maunds of improved cotton seeds were sold to the peasants, which increased up to 91,100 maunds in 1937-38.⁵⁸

Apart from this, agriculture college of Lyallpur, and agriculture department of Punjab, also played a vital role in improving the varieties of cotton seeds. In 1923, Khalsa College, Amritsar, started four-year-degree course in agriculture. But at college level, agriculture education failed to attract the students.⁵⁹ However, it succeeded in vernacular middle schools, which was introduced in 1919. From 1932 onwards, theoretical and practical agriculture was made an integral part of the middle school curriculum. A farm of three acres of land was given to every school and in urban areas a garden of ½ an acre of land was also attached to such schools as provided agriculture education.⁶⁰

Advance irrigation technology such as that of tube-well as well as lift system to draw out canal water was also introduced in Punjab. This type of irrigation system needed electricity. So, one large electricity plant was established at Mandi in western Punjab.⁶¹ Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram (ex-government engineer) was allotted 2800 acres of land in Chenab colony for the development of lift system. After that, he extended lift-irrigation to the neighboring state by obtaining 12,000 acres of land on lease at Buchiana. He

56. For detailed study, Amran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism*, pp. 8-61.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 215-18.

58. B. S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History the Punjab*, p. 194.

59. Trevaskis, *The Economic History of Punjab*, Vol. II, pp. 339-40; B. S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab*, p. 157.

60. B. S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab*, p. 158.

61. Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, p. 207 and 218-22; Mridula Mukherjee, "Some Aspects of Agrarian Structure of Punjab 1925-47", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XV, 26 (1980), pp. A46 - A58.

also obtained land on lease in other colonies for improving irrigation system.⁶² The department of agriculture introduced several types of improved implements like iron plough, harrow, hoe, small pumping machine etc. These types of implements were primarily used in canal colonies.⁶³ In fact, colonial rulers did not want to give real protection to agriculture. The Punjab government did not sanction 5000 acres of land on lease to Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram at Kuthiala to establish 50 tube-wells.⁶⁴

The impact of commercialization of agriculture, especially cotton cultivation in Punjab was not much beneficial to the peasants. The colonial government demanded land revenue in cash. The peasants had to sell their crops in markets or to the moneylenders to pay land revenue.⁶⁵ At the same time, they borrowed money on loan from the moneylenders or Zamindars to pay revenue as well as to perform social ceremonies. However, they had to mortgage their land as security for the loans taken. Thus peasants started falling in debt. According to Darling, the total debt for British India (including Burma) and the Punjab was 600 crores and 90 crores respectively in 1921.⁶⁶ Punjab Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee shows that the total debt was 135 crores rupees in 1929.⁶⁷ In colonial Punjab, the debt average was 31 rupees per cultivated area and 76 rupees per head of the agriculturist population. It was at least nineteen times of the demand of land revenue.⁶⁸ The increase in the value of land was the main cause for the debt. The prices of land rose from 10 rupees per acre in 1869-70 to 451 rupees per acre in 1938-39.⁶⁹

62. Between 1817 and 1919, he obtained 48,650 acres on lease in Lower Bari Doab colony to improve irrigation system. After that in 1923, he obtained 70,000 acres of land near Renala in Lower Bari Doab. See *Ibid.*, pp. 218-222.

63. Malcolm Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, (Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1947, Reprint), pp. 149-50.

64. Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947*, p. 221.

65. Malcolm Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, p. 259; Mridula Mukherjee, "Commercialization and Agrarian Change in Pre-Independence Punjab", in K. N. Raj, Neeladri Bhattacharya, Sumit Guha and Sakti Padhi (eds.), *Essays on the Commercialization of Indian Agriculture*, p. 57.

66. *Ibid.*, PP. 17-18.

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 19-20; B. S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab*, pp. 221-22.

68. B. S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab*, pp. 221-22.

69. *Ibid.*; H. Calvert, *Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab*, (Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, 1936), p. 219 and 226; J. S. Grewal, "Agrarian Production and Colonial Policy in Punjab" in Mushirul Hasan and Narayanai Gupta (eds.), *India's Colonial Encounter: Essays in Memory of Eric Stokes*, p. 366.

However, the sale of land increased after 1858. During 1874-75, 79,000 acres of land was sold, which increased upto 209,000 acres and 321,000 acres respectively in 1884-85 and 1894-95.⁷⁰ Mridula Mukherjee writes: "...It should also be pointed out that even at the existing rate of only 0.5 percent of cultivated area or roughly 150,000 acres sold each year, over half a century, this would mean that roughly 25 percent of the total cultivated area had changed hands."⁷¹ At the same time, mortgage of land also increased during the same years.⁷² Uncertainty of rainfall, epidemics etc. also forced the peasants into debt.⁷³

Middlemen and traders, by 'giving advances to peasants, also forced them to grow cotton in their fields. But there is, of course, no evidence in colonial Punjab that peasants cultivated cotton for market after taking advances from the money lenders or traders.⁷⁴ In fact, cotton was not produced in Punjab on 'dadani' system like Bengal.⁷⁵ The main reason for this was the cotton as the chief commercial crop in this region. It was primarily grown in canal colonies and some parts of the central Punjab. But in the backward regions (west Punjab, south-east Punjab and *barani* area of central Punjab) peasants did not grow cotton crops in any quantity.⁷⁶ Cotton cultivation needed heavy investments. However, peasants preferred cultivating cotton crop when they were sure of good return on investment. In these areas, the number of peasants who worked under *dadani* system was very few. They also preferred to take loan from village *bania* or moneylender or Zamindar.⁷⁷ By the end of the nineteenth century, alienation of land increased. A large number of land transfers from peasants to moneylenders took place.⁷⁸

70. *Ibid.*

71. Mridula Mukherjee, "Commercialization and Agrarian Change in Pre-independence Punjab", p. 56.

72. Before the Act of 1900, about 700,000 acres of land mortgaged. See *Ibid*; J. S. Grewal, "Agrarian Production and Colonial Policy in Punjab", in Mushirul Hasan and Narayanai Gupta (eds.), *India's Colonial Encounter: Essays in Memory of Eric Stokes*, p. 373.

73. Malcolm Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, p. 27.

74. Mridula Mukherjee, "Commercialization and Agrarian Change in Pre-Independence Punjab", p. 61.

75. B. B. Chaudhuri, "The Process of De-peasantisation in Bengal and Bihar, 1885-1947", *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol. II, No. I, p. 128.

76. Mridula Mukherjee, "Commercialization and Agrarian Change in Pre-Independence Punjab", p. 62.

77. *Ibid.*

78. J. S. Grewal, "Agrarian Production and Colonial Policy in Punjab", in Mushirul Hasan and Narayanai Gupta (eds.), *India's Colonial Encounter: Essays in Memory of Eric Stokes*, p. 367.

The colonial government made some efforts to restrict the transfer of land from peasant to moneylenders or traders etc. by passing Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900. Under this Act non-agriculturist classes were not allowed to buy land from a member of agriculturist tribe and not to take it in mortgage for more than twenty years.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, this Act had various defects as well. So, it was amended from time to time.⁸⁰ The government passed other various Acts like The Punjab Restitution of Mortgaged Land Act 1938, Debtor's Protection Act 1936 etc. to restrict the transfer of land to non-agriculturist's hands. A good number of Debt Conciliation Boards, Co-operative Societies, Co-operative Banks and Mortgage Banks were also established to free peasants from debt or loans.⁸¹

The sources of income increased due to the commercialization of agriculture. However, living standard of the peasants increased in Punjab during colonial rule. The peasants started constructing 'pacca' houses. They also started spending money on clothing, on food and drinks as well as on the marriages of their daughters.⁸² In Ludhiana and Hoshiarpur, people started drinking tea.⁸³ The women also started wearing embroidered clothes, jewellery as well as foreign piece-goods.⁸⁴ In fact, the overall condition of the peasants was not good. They were continuously in debt.⁸⁵ Bipan Chandra rightly observes: "...And the benefits of increased commercialization -and also irrigation since high irrigation rate forced the peasant to produce commercial crops - were replaced by the government, landlord, moneylender, merchant and foreign exporter. The peasant often found himself in deeper debt and even less able to improve agriculture."⁸⁶

The colonial rule in Punjab was established in stages. The colonial government developed means of transportation and irrigation system in Punjab.

79. *Punjab Administration Report 1901-02*, p. 37; Malcolm Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, p.6.

80. This Act was amended by Act I of 1907; Act XVIII of 1920; Act I of 1931; Act VII of 1936; Government of India Order, 1937; Act II of 1838; Act X of 1938; Act V of 1938; Act VIII of 1938; Act VII of 1940.

81. B. S. Saini, *The Social and Economic History of the Punjab*, pp.224-249.

82. *Settlement Reports of Rohtak 1873-79*, p. 64; *Settlement Report of Gujarat 1870*, pp. 50-54.

83. Malcolm Darling, *The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt*, p. 138.

84. *Ibid.*, p.141.

85. *Ibid.*, pp. 218-227; Richard G. Fox, *Lions of the Punjab: Culture in the Making*, (Archives Publishers, Distributors, New Delhi, 1987), p. 40.

86. Bipan Chandra, "Re Interpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History", p. 51.

Due to these changes, villages came closer to the world market. The nature of agriculture began to change, but it was not transformed. However, the impact of commercialization of agriculture was not on the same pattern as it was in other regions of the country like Bombay, Madras, Gujarat etc. The climatic and soil conditions of the Punjab were different in comparison especially to those in coastal areas of the country. In backward areas (some districts of western and south-eastern Punjab and even in *barani* areas of central Punjab) low rainfall, lack of irrigation facilities and unfavorable soil restricted the cultivation of cash crops like cotton. In colonial Punjab, cotton cultivation was not developed on the pattern of capitalism. Big capitalist class like the ones in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Gujarat did not develop in Punjab. In fact, the impact of commercialization of agriculture was more pronounced in central Punjab and the regions of canal colonies than backward areas of the Punjab. For instance, colonial government constructed canal colonies in western Punjab. Higher technology such as tube-wells and water-lift system was also introduced in arid areas of the Punjab. Improved implements and new varieties of cotton seeds were also supplied to the peasants. It is true that the yield of cotton cultivation increased during colonial rule. But the small peasants or tenants did not benefit from the commercialization of agriculture. They usually depended for seeds on village *bania* or zamindar or moneylender. They were always exploited by them. Besides, the demand for land revenue in cash forced the peasants to take loan from the moneylenders. They mortgaged their land to the moneylenders as a security for loan. Thus the peasants became tenants. In spite of this, the peasants had to participate in social ceremonies like festivals as well as birth, marriage etc. They could not invest money on agriculture. Uncertainty of rainfall and natural disaster also destroyed the peasant's life from time to time. However, the small peasants and tenants continued to be in debt in colonial Punjab. Most of the peasants lived in poverty.

SANDAL BAR: A LAND OF DISTINCTIVE CULTURE

*Mughees Ahmed Kahlon**

There are some attempts on the history of this region which are really good efforts by the writers. Dullay de Bar, Tarikh-e-Jhang, History of Layall Pur and Chenab Gazetteer are informative and helpful for research scholars. Ahmed Ghazali's Sandal Bar is really a major work on this topic.

Culture is a set of attitudes, belief's and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process and provide the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behavior in a political system. Punjab is the land of five rivers as the word *Punj* stands for five and *Ab* (water) means river. *Sandal Bar*¹ is situated in *Rachna Duaab*, (the area between Ravi and Chenab rivers) the heart of the Punjab. Bar means ruined, desert and waste land. While Sandal is a character of the past. Different opinions are noted on Sandal and first of them is that Sandal was grandfather of Dullah Bhatti (a heroic character of Mughal era) The second one is that Sandal was a outlaw person of the Bar and the third is that Sandal was a chief of Chohrras (a tribe of the past). In brief, Sandal Bar comprises one of the above mentioned characters.²

Indo-Pak Southern Asia is a massive triangular area. This territory is hailed as one of the most productive and dense regions of the world. The history of this area is as ancient as of human. The ancient sources of the history of these areas are the travelogues of Greek tourists. Man used to live here for more or less than five hundred thousand years ago. The ancient inhabitants of old era (50,000 to 12,000 B.C.) used to live in caverns or pits in India. These people were dispersed.³ After this some brutal clans came here. These savage people belonged to the main human species of Abyssinian

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1. *Sandal Bar consists of the area of Faisalabad, Jhang, Giuranwala and Nankana Sahib Districts.*
2. Mughees Ahmed, *Faisalabad Divison ke Siasat per Biradarism Kay Asraat*, Ph.D Thesis, Department of Political Science, B Z Uninversity, Multan, 2004, p. 44.
3. Wahab-ud-Din Amratsari, *Tarikh-e-Kumbohaan*, Lahore: Anjman-e-Kumbohaan, 1972, np.

and they were entitled as Austerlied. These savage tribes came in India in search of food.⁴ Savage clans were bifurcated into two parts or groups, which were *Mandda* and *Moonkhamir*. After them, some others came into existence with the mixture of Austerlied and species of Roman Sea.⁵ Darawards came from north-west high way, Bolan and Khayber 2900 years B.C., as Aryans (detail below) came after 1000 years. Dravidians are the original inhabitants of Indo-Pak.⁶ Darawards did not play vital role in the history of sub-continent, because they were dispersed by the greatest civilization of new comers (Aryan) from north-west. However, they were Drawards who laid the foundation of first civilization in ancient India.⁷ After Drawards the Aryans came. Aryan means gentle, farmer and elevated caste. They were cultivators.⁸ The Aryans came From Central Asia and most of them were not light skinned.⁹ The Aryans captured the Indian nations and to maintain their eminence they enchaind them in the trammels of inferior castes for thousands of years.¹⁰ The Punjab also belongs to above mention nations or races. The people of sandal bar have had its periods of poverty and wealth in a regular sequence. Before the arrival of Muslims, this area was mainly consisted waste land and remains in same condition upto 1892. The people of sandal bar attained their typical culture for hundred years.

Sandal Bar consists of the area of Faisalabad, Jhang. Giuranwala and Nankana Sahib Districts. Originally people of Sandal Bar are Arab "Baddu" and its culture is now mixed-culture.¹¹ In Gunko Fiskey's opinion, the inhabitants of this area belonged to Madra tribes.¹² Ikraam Ali Malik opines that local people of 'Sandal Bar were Malawas in Maha Bharat era.¹³ Madras were non-Aryans and were settled in Sandal Bar in Maha Bharat period.

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4. Ali, Abbas Jalalpuri, *Rawayat-e-Tamadam-e-Qadeem*, Lahore: Takhliqat, 1999, pp. 183-184.
 5. Muhammed Mujeeb, *Tarikh Tamadan-e-Hind*, Lahore, Progressive Book, 1986, p. 24.
 6. Chaudhry M Iqbal, *Pakistani Society: A Sociological Perspective And Method*, Lahore: Aziz Publishers, 1986, np.
 7. Gunko Fiskey, Translator. Lahore, *Pakistani Nations*, Fiction House, 2000, np.
 8. Rashid Akhtar Nadvi, *Arz-e-Pakistan Ki Tarikh*, Lahore, Sang-e-Meel, 1998, np.
 9. Mujeeb Muhammed, p. 46.
 10. Sibat Hassan, *Pakistan men Tahzib ka Artqa*, Karachi: Kutab Printers & Publishers, 1975, p. 86.
 11. Ahmed Ghazali, *Sandal Bar*, Froze Sons, Lahore, 1986, p. 100.
 12. Gunko, Fiskey, np.
 13. Ikraam Ali Malik, *Tarikh-e-Punjab*, Lahore: Salman Matboaat, 1990, p. 17.

They mixed up with Aryans later on.¹⁴ According to census of 1891 its population was 64,610. These people were jangli speaking and famous *biradaries* were Balochs, Bhattis, Viraks, Waghas, Vasirs, Harrals, Sials, Kharrals, Vattus.... and majority of them were Jatts. Currently these locals are living along with river sides. They are in majority in Sandhlianwali, Kamalia, Tandla, Kunjwani, Satyana, Jhamara, Jarranwala, (Faisalabad) and Chiniot, Mochiwala, Shorekot, Jhang in district Jhang.¹⁵ The ancient history of the *bar* is courageous one. Alexander the Great (327-324 BC) faced the most dangerous rival of his war life in this area. Mallahi or Malloe (local tribe) of Sandal Bar wounded him and he preferred to die than surrender.¹⁶ Dullah Bhatti (Mughal era), a hero, belonged to this bar. Folk tales Heer-Ranjha, Mirza-Sahbaan and Sahti-Murad, marvelous pieces of Punjabi culture, also belonged to this area. The Punjabi word "Raath" is invention of this area. The chiefs of local tribes were called 'Raath' in Sandal Bar. Numbers of local castes/*biradaries* of Sandal Bar are mentioned in table 1 :

Table 1
Major local *Biradaries* in 1901

Balochs	17,423
Khokhar	8,511
Kharals	7,233
Harrals	1,912
Vattus	2,466

Source: Gazetteer of the Chenab Colony 1904, p. 57.¹⁷

The real work of colonization of Sandal Bar began in February 1892. The Revenue Secretary, Punjab Government explained the principles for the distribution of the land of Chenab colony in letter No. 327 of 22nd July 1891, as follows.

"It seemed essential to preserve the tradition of Punjab. No other general frame of society is at present either possible or desirable in the Province. An area has been reserved for capitalists. Traditional capitalist forming in general is not a system suitable to the Punjab. But a moderate infusion of the capitalist element is not without advantages. It supplies natural-leaders for the new society. It gives opportunity to Government to reward its well-deserving servants."¹⁸

14. Ahmed Ghazali, p. 78.

15. Mughees Ahmed, pp. 42-43.

16. V.A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*, Translator, Lahore: Takhleeqat, 2005, p. 118.

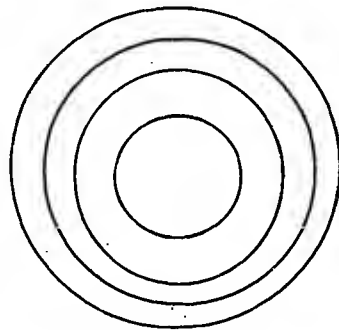
17. *Gazetteer of the Chenab Colony 1904*, p. 57.

18. *Ibid.*, Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1996, pp. 14-17.

In 1892, the settlers (*Abadkaar*) on waste land were from all over the Punjab and belonged to cultivator families. Under the system followed for the colonization of the area and the considerations which weighed with the colonists actually determined the composition and character of the later days inhabitants of this colony who laid the foundation of a stable and prosperous rural society.¹⁹ Settlers belonged to the best agriculturist families of central Punjab.²⁰ A specific piece of land was exclusively allotted to one *caste/biradari*. Through Punjab Alienation of Land Act 1901, the non-cultivator *castes/biradries* were prohibited to purchase a cultivated land. In this way, the local-community, like other parts of Punjab, was divided into cultivators and non-cultivators (*kammi*). The agriculturist clans had been given more government jobs. In this way, the foundation of rural community's specification became *caste/biradri* instead of religion. The local people were annoyed on this settlement. They detested the interference in their liberty and often terrified the settlers. Particularly conflict between Hindu jatts and locals was eminent.²¹ Local people were nomadic and glazier and were called "Jangli" officially and unofficially.²²

The settlers were allotted land in shape of "*patti*" (jointly) mean the villages of one *caste/biradari* and one district were together. Major *castes/biradarries* of immigrants were Jatts, Arains, Rajputs and Gujjars. Locals were in outer circle while Muslim settlers were in the middle and Hindus and Sikhs were settled in Inner circle.²³

Sketch of colonization scheme of Sandal Bar (Faisalabad)



Circle 1, Faisalabad city and surroundings;

19. Muhammed Zagham Pasha and Shaukat Ali Shahid, *History of Lyallpur now Faisalabad*, Faisalabad : Kitab Markaz, 1996, p. 126.
20. Ahmed, Ghazali, p. 78.
21. Mughees Ahmed, *Faisalabad Division Ke Siasat per Biradarism Kay Asraat*, p. 45.
22. Zahid, Chaudhary, *Muslim Punjab Ka Siasi Artqa*, Lahore: Adara Mutalia Tareekh, 1991, p. 34 (the word *Jangli* is used for local people of Sandal Bar (resident of jungle).
23. Mughees Ahmed, *Faisalabad Division Ke Siasat per Biradarism Kay Asraat*, p. 69.

Circle 2. Toba, Sumandari, Sahianwala, Barnala, Aminpur, Nawan Lahore, Gojra;

Locals are in circle 3. This area is including Sandhlianwala, Kamalia, Tandla, Kunjwani Satyana, Jhamara, Jarranwala, Chiniot, Mochiwala (Jhang).

The division of immigrants by religion & castes are shown in table 2.

Table 2

Muslims	Total 2,80,000, Jatts 1,50,602, Arains 70,234, Rajpoots 40,120, Gujjars 6402....
Sikhs	Total 88,000, Jatts 60, 000, others 28000.
Hindus	Total 1,30,000, Jatts 19000, Choohras 97000....

Source : *Gazetteer of the Chenab Colony 1904*, pp. 36, 57.

Division of immigrants by districts and castes/biradaris is shown in table 3.

Table 3

Population of immigrants

District	Population	Caste/biradari	Persons	Muslims	Hindus	Sikhs
Sialkot	103,390	Jatt	230,250	150,602	19,139	60,318
Amritsar	67,963	Arain	70,246	70,234	----	12
Jalandhar	43,593	Rajput	43,935	40,120	1,120	2,677
Gurdaspur	43,593	Gujjar	6,580	6,402	154	24
Hoshiarpur	35,099	Pathan	4,750	4,750	----	----

Source : *Gazetteer of the Chenab Colony 1904*, pp. 36, 57.

The four acres land of Chak No. 212/RB was named Layall Pur 1892 on the name of Sir J.B. Loyall, the Lt. Governor of at that time. It was planned on the shape of U. J. (British flag) and alike sketch of Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. Captain Pufam Young planed the Layall Pur city. The groundwork of Clock Tower started in 1903, under the supervision of Sir Ganga Ram. The district formed in 1904 was regularized in 1906 as a part of Multan division.²⁴ The increasing ratio of its population is amazing one. The population of city increased 700 times (5,000 to 35, 000, 00. approximately) in one hundred years of its total life.

Table 4

Population of Layallpur/Faisalabad city

1901	5,000	1906	13,483
1947	80,000	1951	1,79,144
1961	4,25,248	1972	8,33,000
1981	11,04,000	1998	19,70,000 (district 54,29,547)

24. Mughees Ahmed, p. 69.

In the new rural infrastructure and physical framework of facilities which was introduced by British, a lot of goods and services were provided to the locals and settlers. Major changes were noted in the basic physical systems of business and agriculture. It facilitated to promote direct productive and other socio-economic activities.

According to new infrastructure of rural and urban division some of the components were very similar to each other. Rural infrastructure characterized the systems and services that were necessary for rural development. It included those services that were very useful for the development of farm and non-farm activities in the rural areas. The items covering under rural infrastructure were irrigation, roads, water management and its distribution systems, primary health, primary education, family welfare, sanitation, rural banking, rural marketing. As far as the urban infrastructure was concerned, it included all essential aspects for the development of city and mostly useful for manufacturing and service sector growth. The items covered under this group were urban roads, railways, health, education, and shopping complexes.

Culture of Layallpur was a blend of many cultures. This culture was a mixture of entire Punjab. The regional traditions of Sial Kot, Amritsar, Jalandhar, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur and Jhang were the main components of this mixed culture. Ahmed Khan Kharal and Bhagat Singh (against British) are still heroes of Punjab who belonged to warrior culture of this area. Jagha, a daring character of Punjab, still a symbol of courageous and heroic character of films and songs and *dholaas* was also son of this soil. Social system was dominated by caste/biradari system. Jaats and Rajputs were mixed in Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus and Arains only in Muslims, were major castes of that time. The main Muslim/non Muslim Jaat tribes were: Bajwa, Chatta, Cheema, Randhawa, Ghumman, Kahlon, Gil, Sehota, Taror, Waraich, Bandasha, Wahla, Bhutta, Malhi, Sukhera, Langah, Virk, Khokhar, Sial, Kharal, Ghakkar, etc. While the important Rajput tribes were: Bhatti, Punwar, Chauhan, Janjua, Sial and Wattu etc. However, some of these Rajput tribes are classified Jaats and vice versa.

Rajput and Jatt tribes are so mixed up that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other at many places and in several cases. Some of the Rajput tribes are probably of Jats origin and vice versa. Even tribes which bear well-known Rajput names are often classified as Jatts in the Punjab. Anyway, the origin of both is the same as stated earlier.

After independence, a large number of refugees came here. Reasons were :

1. Huge population of Sikhs and Hindus migrated to India and they

left productive agricultural land and Muslim refugees of East Punjab settled here.

- II. Relatives of already settled Muslims of Eastern districts came here. The land of circle 1 (see sketch) allotted to refugees which was closer to Layallpur (Faisalabad) city.
- III. Being an industrial city and big grain market it was an attractive city for workers.

Pasha comments on the causes of these change;

“Only a society like the one which developed in the Colony area could successfully face the challenge of the arrival of a large number of the refugees from the East Punjab after independence and their rehabilitation on the land abandoned by the non-Muslim owners in Lyallpur (Faisalabad). Its rural population in 1947 was about seven lacs which rose to 18,70,000 by 1951.”²⁵

Faisalabad city population detail is given in table 4. Numbers mentioned in table 4 show the mixed culture of Faisalabad along with locals. Faisalabad, a city of textile is situated in Central Punjab. The district has an area of 5,856 sq km and its population is about 5.5 million persons. This district consists of six sub-divisions. Including Faisalabad city, Faisalabad sadar, Chak Jhumra. Jarranwala, Samundari and Tandilianwala. Toba Tek Singh is working as a separate district with Gojra and Kamalia tehsils. The current urban culture is very different from of the past whereas the rural culture is still having some traditions from the earlier period. For example; rural games, fair and festivals are still in its early styles. Abadkars (settlers) and a huge number of refugees came from different districts of East Punjab (Indian). Although earlier situation remained the same but innumerable changes were noted in this period. Locals were integrated in planed agriculture system whereas they were used to live in waste land in small houses with their individual liberty. The main property of locals was their animals. They were not happy with this *abadkari* system. In the new culture religious elements disappeared and *biradari* factors came into sight in local culture to fill the gap of leadership and contest. Ahmed Ghazali Writes about this mixed culture; “mixing of local *biradaries* and migrated created a new type of culture which jumbled the previous one.”²⁶ Land owners still use the word “*kammi*” for landless families in rural area. Abdullah Rokarri opines that the word “*kammi*” is

25. Muhammed, Zaghham Pasha, p. 126.

26. Ahmed Ghazali, p. 101.

often used in Central Punjab because Hindu traditions are more effected here than other areas.²⁷ In 1977, the name of Layall Pur replaced by Faisalabad. The traditions and customs of the area have been changing with the passage of time and same as the rest area of Punjab but the influence of caste system is still dominating in the form of *biradarism*. *Biradari* organizations had been working similar by in the past. For example, Sir Chhotu Ram encouraged education and tribal Unity, founding and editing *The Jatt Gazette*. He also helped to organize an All India Jaat Conference similar to the Rajput and Brahmin caste associations.²⁸ The word '*Muhajr*' (refugee) is not used in superior or inferior term as it used in Southern Punjab and Sindh because the settlers (before 1947) were already in majority and their languages and traditions were same as *Muhajrs*. The '*Muhajr*' is the term which is used by Muslims who migrated from India to Pakistan at the time of partition of India 1947. Seventy percent of these refugees in (West) Pakistan were Punjabi's who settled mainly in (West) Punjab.²⁹

The main concern of this study has been the elaboration of the culture of Sandal Bar. Major causes of conversion of culture are also noted in the study. Variations and similarities in past and present culture are also found. There are so many differences in culture among the different cultural groups. In different matters such as dress, food, traditions and customs have differences in daily practices. The cultural origins of Sandal Bar came from the Arab civilization; later culture is blend of North India and eastern Afghanistan, with major influences from Persia, Turkistan and Hellenistic Greece as it is of sub-continent. However, it was the first part of the subcontinent to receive the full impact of Islam. Hence it has developed an identity of its own. The locals and settlers of Sandal Bar highly respected the traditional Family values and considered sacred. Urban families have grown into a nuclear family system, owing to the socio-economic limitation imposed by the traditional joint Family system. The past few decades have seen emergence of a middle class in Faisalabad city. They are traders, merchants, small industrialists and highly paid servicemen. The educational system also promotes the qualities of inhabitants of Faisalabad. The rich and unique cultural heritage of Punjab is the chief feature of this area. Traditions have actively been preserved throughout its history.

27. Abdullah Rokarri, *Maen aur mera Pakistan*, Lahore; Jang Publications, 1989, p. 38.

28. Ian Talbot, *Punjab and The Raj*, Translator, Lahore; Takhliqat, 1999, p. 288.

29. S.M. Naseem & Kahlid Nadvi, *The Post-Colonial State and Social Transformation in India and Pakistan*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 27.

Faisalabad is joining eastern and southern Punjab together. The cultural influences of the rest of the Punjab can be seen in daily lives that have added their cultural traditions to the region. Local identities and local issues became the substance of local politics. Family, faction, and *biradari* ties increasingly determine political loyalties and political power are determined by the amount of patronage at one's disposal. It is human nature to exercise ethnic preference or their own group in the form of aggression against others. The ethnic issues are not remarkable in this area. The words like local, muhajir and *abadkar*, are not so important in their nature and its impacts on daily lives are not distinguished because productive land and near to market helped the refugees to develop their economic status and involved in politics and they have no perception of exclusion. Weak political parties and political system gave them an opportunity to develop their relations on the basis of former districts. They are like Surnames such as Jalandhri, Hoshiarpur and Ludhianvi.

The culture of Faisalabad is still a blend of many cultures. This culture is a mixture of entire Punjab. The regional traditions of Sial Kot, Amritsar, Jalandhar, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur and Jhang are the main components of this mixed culture. The *Biradarism*/caste system is major component of this culture. The majority land owners have small pieces of land which is in acres. Therefore, middle class culture is dominated instead of landed aristocracy. The landed aristocracy and the feudal lords in and outside the legislatures have largely dominated the political and social scene. They want to static the development of the area but in Faisalabad there are no such large and powerful groups to oppose legal and political reforms that may weaken its control on the rural areas. The rural area is rich in family-controlled social system and people of urban area are doing their jobs, to promote the social and economic status of the area. The local political leaders belonged to middle class instead of autocratic families in which the genes and means take precedence over competence and the incident of birth provides a sure ladder for leadership. The feudal system negates the concept of ideal social setup in the same way as the dictator rule. Landlord-dominated cultures could not articulate and aggregate the public interests. It is concluded that the present is much better in some ways (infrastructure, food, dresses ..) than the past of this particular area.

MUTUAL RELATIONS OF THE PUNJAB HILL STATES : 1550-1850 A.D.

*Charu Plaha**

In the Punjab hills, most of the chiefs belonged to two ruling houses: Jammu and Kangra. It is interesting to note that out of eighteen States of the central group, as many as ten were ruled by the members of the same family of which Jammu was the head. These States were: Jammu, Jasrota, Mankot, Lakhanpur, Samba, Bhau, Tirikot, Bhoti, Akhnur and Dalpatpur. The ruling house of Kangra had six offshoots: Jaswan, Guler, Siba, Datarpur, Bhimbar and Khari-hariyali. The States of Bhadu and Bhadarwah were the offshoots of Basohli which itself was founded by a cadet of the ruling family of Kulu. The States of Mandi and Suket were founded in the twelfth century as offshoots of Kulu; the ruler of Mandi was the younger brother of the chief of Suket.¹ Being all of the same race and faith, and also nearly related to one another by closer family ties and even marriage, the hill chiefs were considerate of each other's rights. They were content to make each other tributary, or to replace a deposed chief by one of his own kinsmen.²

It is interesting to note that the hill chiefs of the same ruling house did not enter into matrimonial alliances with one another. Whereas, there are a number of references of matrimonial alliances established by the chiefs of these groups outside their kinship ties. Sansar Chand of Kangra (1775-1823), for instance, married a daughter of Kishan Singh of Suket and also the daughter of Man Pal of Bangahal.³ Anirudh Chand, son of Sansar Chand of Kangra

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1. Ahsan Raza Khan, *Chieftains in the Mughal Empire During the Reign of Akbar*, Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1977, pp. 3, 220 (cited hereafter as *Chieftains*); J. Hutchison & J. Ph. Vogel, *History of the Panjab Hill States*, vol. I, Shimla: Department of Languages and Culture, 1982 (reprint, first published in 1933), pp. 47-51, 59 (cited hereafter as *Hill States*).
2. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 62.
3. Kishan Singh was the brother of Raja Ranjit Sen of Suket. Similar reference is of Uchal Pal of Bangahal's daughter who was married to the Raja of Siba. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 361, Vol. II, p. 493.

married a Suket princess.⁴ Charhat Singh of Chamba (1808-1844) married a Katoch princess. There is a portrait of Raja Charhat Singh with his Katoch *rani* watching a thunderstorm in Bhuri Singh Museum.⁵ Indar Singh, son of Raja Dayadhata of Nurpur, married a daughter of the ruler of Kangra and also settled in that State.⁶ Devi Chand of Kahlur (1741-78) married a Katoch princess.⁷ Abhaya Chand's daughter married Amrit Pal of Basohli.⁸ It is equally interesting to note that the powerful States like Kangra and Jammu have no matrimonial ties with one another. We have a reference of a ruler of Kangra tying knot with the princess of an offshoot of Jammu. Anirudh Chand of Kangra, for instance, married a daughter of the ruler of Jasrota in 1804.⁹

There are references of matrimonial ties established by the chiefs of Jammu family with others. Hari Dev of Jammu, for instance, married the daughter of Suraj Sen of Mandi.¹⁰ Prithvi Singh of Nurpur was married to daughter of Ranjit Dev of Jammu. Brajraj Dev of Jammu married a Chamba princess.¹¹ Dhian Singh Dogra was married to two daughters of the ruler of Siba.¹² Sampat Pal of Bhadarwah (1735-70), married the daughters of Jammu and Jasrota.¹³ His daughter named Tholu was married to the prince of Jasrota.¹⁴ The principality of Basohli entered into matrimonial alliances with States of Jammu, Jasrota and Bhoti.¹⁵ Umed Singh of Chamba (1748-64) was married

4. W.G. Archer, *Indian Paintings From the Punjab Hills, A Survey and History of Pahari Miniature Painting*, Vol. I, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1973, p. 346 (cited hereafter as *Indian Paintings*), pp. 129, 254. Prakash Singh of Guler (1760-90) married Ananta Devi, sister of Raj Singh of Chamba in 1765.
5. J. Ph. Vogel, *Catalogue of the Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba*, Calcutta, 1909, p. 29, D. VII, VIII (cited hereafter as *Catalogue*); Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 321.
6. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 260.
7. Bik Chand of Kahlur married Katoch princess. Abhaya Chand of Kangra married Suratu, daughter of Sampat Pal of Bhadarwah. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 500, 504, 624.
8. Similar reference is of Hindal Pal of Basohli who married a Katoch princess, Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, p. 17, 19.
9. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 254.
10. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 386.
11. Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Punjab* (tr. Jit Singh Seetal), Patiala: Punjabi University, 1968, p. 417.
12. Diwan Amar Nath, *Zafarnama-i-Ranjit Singh* (ed. Kirpal Singh), Patiala: Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, 1995 (reprint, first published in 1983), p. 148; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 194.
13. Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, p. 55.
14. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 624.
15. Kirpal Pal of Basohli married a daughter of Ranjit Dev of Jammu in 1759. Vijay Pal married the daughter of Daler Singh of Jammu in 1783 and the daughter of Ram Singh of Jammu in 1792. Mahendra Pal married a daughter of Ajab Dev of Jasrota. Bhupendra Pal married a daughter of Raja of Bhoti. Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, pp. 17, 19, 348; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, pp. 605, 607, 611.

to Jammu and Jasrota princesses.¹⁶ Jit Singh of Chamba (1794-1808) married the Jammu princess, named Sarada Devi.¹⁷

We have a number of references of matrimonial ties established by the chiefs belonging to the Kulu family with others. Bidhi Singh of Kulu (1672-88), for instance, married a daughter of Chatar Singh of Chamba.¹⁸ Man Singh of Kulu (1688-1719) married a sister of Prithi Pal of Bangahal.¹⁹ Raja Sahib Sen of Mandi (1554-75) was married to Prakash Devi, a daughter of Raja of Kahlur.²⁰ Suraj Sen of Mandi (1637-64) married the daughter of Jagat Singh of Nurpur.²¹ Sidh Sen of Mandi's (1684-1727) daughter was married to Prithi Pal of Bangahal. Prithi Pal of Bangahal's sister was married to Man Singh of Kulu.²² Dip Chand of Kahlur (1650-67) married Kunkam Devi, daughter of Jagat Singh of Kulu and also married Jalal Devi of Mandi.²³ Prakash Singh of Guler (1760-90) married the daughter of Shamsheer Sen of Mandi.²⁴ Bikrama Sen of Suket's (1791-1838) daughter married a Nurpur prince.²⁵ Sangram Pal of Basohli's (1635-73) daughter was married to Chatar Singh of Chamba.²⁶ Medini Pal of Basohli (1725-36) married a daughter of Dalip Singh of Guler.²⁷ Raj Singh of Chamba (1764-94) married Naginu, daughter of Sampat Pal of Bhadarwah. There is a portrait of Raja Raj Singh with his rani Naginu in Bhuri

16. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 44; Archer, *Indian Paintings*, vol. I, p. 65; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 313.

17. Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, p. 426.

18. Partap Singh of Chamba (1559-86), for instance, married three princesses of Kulu. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 456; Jagdev Singh, *Kangra; The Katoch Saga From Susarman Chandra to Sansar Chandra*, Palampur: Rachna Publishers, 1993, p. 77 (cited hereafter as *Kangra*); Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, p. 320.

19. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, pp. 389, 492.

20. Shyam Sen of Mandi's (1664-79) sister was married to Dip Chand of Kahlur. Archer, *Indian Paintings*, p. 346 (cited hereafter as *Indian Paintings*); Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 349.

21. Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, p. 346.

22. Shamsheer Sen of Mandi (1727-81) was married to a daughter of Ugar Singh of Chamba. Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, p. 347; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, pp. 389-90, 492, 500.

23. Similar reference is of Bik Chand of Kahlur who married Bangahal princess. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, pp. 500-01.

24. Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, p. 129.

25. Shyam Sen and Ranjit Sen of Suket entered into matrimonial alliance with Guler. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 353, 364, Vol. II, p. 602.

26. Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, p. 17.

27. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 606.

Singh Museum, Chamba.²⁸ Jit Singh of Chamba (1794-1808) married the daughter of Raja of Bhadarwah.²⁹

These references suggest that the hill chiefs entered into matrimonial alliances with the rulers of other States. These matrimonial ties strengthened their relationship with one another.

There are instances where the hill chiefs sought help of their own kinsmen to fight against their common enemy, the Mughals. In 1573-74, for example, the chief of Jaswan was said to have supported Bidhi Chand of Kangra against the Mughals.³⁰ Similarly, when the Mughal contingent invaded Kahlur, Raja Shyam Sen of Mandi came to the rescue of Raja Kalian Chand of Kahlur.³¹

There are instances when the hill chiefs lent support to their own kinsmen for territorial occupation. Raja Bahadur Singh of Kulu, for instance, was assisted by Raja Sahib Sen of Mandi for an attack on Lag, a part of Kulu, on the right bank of Beas. On the partition of territory, after the victory, Mandi received what is known as Saraj-Mandi and Kulu took the portion which now goes by the name of Saraj-Kulu.³² The hill States Bhadu and Basohli being so closely related to each other by family ties, acted together on a number of occasions.³³ Jammu had a special relationship with Jasrota and this was further strengthened during the eighteenth century, when Jammu princes, Gansar Dev and Balwant Singh appear to have built their residential mansions in Jasrota.³⁴

Similar references have been found in other principalities. Raja Gaur Sen of Mandi, for instance, was assisted by Bhim Chand of Kahlur against Suket.³⁵ With the help of Siba, Kahlur and Mandi, Udai Singh of Chamba

28. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p.29, D.V; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 316.

29. Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, p. 426. Bhup Chand of Bhadarwah married Atharbanu, a Chamba princess. There is reference of Sampat Pal of Bhadarwah's daughter named Darsanu married Prithvi Singh of Nurpur. Vogel, *Catalogue*, pp.70,74,C. 22, 59; Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. I, p. 384; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, pp. 624, 626.

30. Ahsan Raza Khan, *Chieftains*, p. 47.

31. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 386.

32. As the result of a subsequent invasion of Lag, the districts of Sanor and Badar were annexed by Mandi, while Kulu obtained Pirkot, Madanpur, and twelve neighbouring villages. *Gazetteer of the District Mandi*, 1920, p. 29 (all the subsequent references to the District Gazetteers would be prefixed hereafter as DG); Lepel Griffin, *Rajas of Punjab*, Lahore, 1870, p. 576; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 380.

33. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 635. Amrit Pal of Basohli and Bhadu unitedly invaded Chamba in 1774 and seized Bhalai and Jundh.

34. S.D.S. Charak, *A Short History of Jammu Raj. From Earliest Times to 1846 A.D.*, Pathankot: Ajaya Prakashan, 1985, p. 112.

35. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 387.

drove out the invaders and restored the infant Raja Dalip Singh of Guler to *gaddi*.³⁶ In 1641, Prithvi Singh of Chamba obtained help in money and troops from the Rajas of Mandi and Suket to recover his kingdom from Nurpur.³⁷

Annexation of territories and State boundaries were also the area of contest between the hill chiefs within their own kinsgroup. In order to expand his territories northwards, Suraj Sen of Mandi invaded Bangahal in 1637. He was opposed and driven back by Jagat Singh of Kulu who had come to assist the chief of Bangahal. The forts of Karanpur, Shahpur and Shamsherpur belonging to Mandi were captured by the Raja of Kulu.³⁸ Dharm Chand of Kangra and his son, Jai Chand seized Kotla, which was a part of the Guler State.³⁹

The struggle between the States of Mandi and Suket was long and fierce. As Lepel Griffin remarks, 'Mandi and Suket have always been rivals and generally enemies, but for several generations there was little to show on either side as the result of their warfare. When a powerful Raja ruled at Suket, he won back all the territory which his predecessors had lost, and at one time Suket possessions extended to the very walls of Mandi. In the same manner, when a powerful chief ruled in Mandi, the borders of Suket were much reduced, and its outlying forts and districts fell into the hands of its rival. The plain of Balh lying between the two capitals was common ground of desire and dispute'.⁴⁰ In 1575, Raja Narain Sen of Mandi, for example, annexed a large portion of Suket, fixing the boundary at Balh and Lohara.⁴¹ From 1650

36. Raja Raj Singh of Guler died in 1695, leaving a seven years old son, Dalip Singh, Udai Singh of Chamba was appointed his guardian. Udai Singh was asked to help when the Rajas of Jammu and Basohli invaded Guler, taking advantage of Dalip Singh's minority. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 502.

37. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 304.

38. Jagat Singh of Kulu took Dewal, Sansal and Ber from Bangahal as price of his assistance. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, pp. 383, 492; *DG Kangra*, 1883-84, p. 14; Griffin, *Rajas of Punjab*, pp. 571-2; G.T. Vigne, *A Personal Narrative of a visit to Ghuzni, Kabul and Afghanistan, and of residence at the court of Dost Mohammad; With Notices of Runjit Sing, Khiva and the Russian Expedition*, vol. I, London, 1843, p. iii (cited hereafter as *Travels*); W. Moorcroft & G. Trebeck, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab, in Ladak and Kashmir, in Peshawar, Kabul and Kunduz and Bokhara From 1819 to 1825*, Vol. I, Patiala: Punjab Languages Department, 1970, (reprint, first published in 1837), pp. 66-7 (cited hereafter as *Travels*).

39. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 201-2.

40. Griffin, *Rajas of Punjab*, p. 579; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 356-7.

41. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 380.

onwards, Mandi began to enlarge its borders more and more at the expense of Suket.⁴²

There are references of conflicts between the hill chiefs which sometimes were carried from generation to generation. Upto the present time, the people of Chamba never mentioned the names of Basohli and Nurpur directly, referring to them as *Parla Mulk*, or country across the Ravi and *Sapparwala Shahr*, or rocky town respectively, out of distaste for those places. Between Chamba and Basohli, the *parganas* of Bhalai and Jundh, and between Nurpur and Basohli, the fort of Shahpur served as points of friction for several generations.⁴³ Prithvi Singh of Chamba had made over the *pargana* of Bhalai to Sangram Pal of Basohli for his assistance against Jagat Singh of Nurpur. But soon after, a boundary dispute arose between Chamba and Basohli. Prithvi Singh wanted to get back Bhalai. The Mughal emperor Shah Jahan was approached. There is an Imperial document of 1648 in the collection of Bhuri Singh Museum through which a declaration was made that Bhalai belonged to Chamba.⁴⁴ However, it seems that Bhalai was never given back to Chamba because when Chatar Singh of Chamba ascended the throne in 1664, he sent his brother, Jai Singh to Sangram Pal of Basohli, to demand the restoration of the Bhalai *'ildqa*, alienated by his father. This demand being refused, Chatar Singh, invaded Basohli and re-annexed Bhalai to Chamba.⁴⁵ In 1708, a treaty of friendship between Basohli and Chamba was signed. It does not seem to have held good for long as in 1720, a war broke out between Chamba and Basohli. Dhiraj Pal of Basohli was killed in the battle, probably in an attempt to re-assert his sway over the *pargana* of Bhalai. In 1739, Raja Ugar Singh of Chamba lost Bhalai alongwith Jundh to the chief of Basohli. However in 1758,

42. *DG Mandi*, 1904, p. 34; Griffin, *Rajas of Punjab*, p. 634, Hutchison & Vogel; *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 358, 364, Vol. II, p. 389. In 1653, Suraj Sen of Mandi took the districts of Patri and Sulani from Suket.

43. B.N. Goswamy, *Social Background of Kangra Valley Painting*, Ph.D. Thesis, Chandigarh: Panjab University, 1961, p. 68; H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province of India*, Vol. III Patiala: Punjab Languages Department, 1970 (reprint), pp. 89-90 (cited hereafter as *A Glossary*); Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 63, 318-19.

44. There is another document dated 1661 which clearly mentions that territory of Bhalai was for generations had been in *watan* of the above Raja and had been forcefully occupied by Sangram Pal of Basohli. Vogel, *Catalogue*, pp. 44, 66, C. 1-4.

45. B.R. Grover, 'Relationship Between the Sovereign State (the Mughals and Afghans) and Punjab Hill Chiefs During the 17th and 19th Centuries (A Case Study of Chamba Chieftainship based on Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba Documents)', *Proceedings, Punjab History Conference* (Patiala, 1983), p. 97.

these areas were restored to Umed Singh of Chamba through a *sanad* dated 26 August 1758, issued by the Mughal Viceroy.⁴⁶ In 1782, Raj Singh of Chamba invaded Basohli. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia assisted Raj Singh and the latter State received help from another Sikh *Sardar*, Jai Singh Kanhaiya. After conquering Basohli, Raj Singh restored the State on the payment of a lakh of rupees.⁴⁷

During the reign of Krishan Pal of Basohli, the *'ilaqa* of Shahpur-Kandi was taken from Nurpur. Unfriendly feelings arose between Jagat Singh of Nurpur and Bhupat Pal of Basohli.⁴⁸ The States of Chamba and Nurpur had also been fighting with each other. The war between Raja Balabhadra of Chamba and Jagat Singh of Nurpur started in 1613 and ended in the final invasion of Chamba by Jagat Singh in 1623. However, Prithvi Singh was able to recover Chamba in 1641. When Jagat Singh revolted against Shah Jahan, Prithvi Singh had offered his services to the emperor.⁴⁹

The rice producing area of Rihlu and Pathiyar was the bone of contention between Kangra and Chamba.⁵⁰ The irrigated 'rice bowl' of Baijnath among

46. Vogel, *Catalogue*, pp. 66-7, C. 5, 11; Grover, 'Relationship Between the Sovereign State and Punjab Hill Chiefs During the 17th and 19th Centuries', *Proceedings, Punjab History Conference* (Patiala, 1983), pp. 99-100.

47. *DG Chamba*, 1904, p. 99; Rose, *Glossary*, vol. I, p. 693; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 316; H.R. Gupta, *The Sikh Movement in Kangra Hills 1700-1800 A.D.*, *Proceedings, Punjab History Conference*, 14th Session (1980), p. 148.

48. Bhupat Pal of Basohli on a false accusation was arrested by Jahangir and cast into prison in Delhi, where he languished for fourteen years. At this time, Jagat Singh took possession of Basohli State and placed it under the charge of his own officers. Bhupat Pal was released in 1627. He returned to Basohli in disguise and having collected a force from among his own people, expelled the Nurpur garrison and recovered the State. But this was not the end of it. Sometime afterwards, Jagat Singh of Nurpur got Bhupat Pal assassinated, when the latter had gone to Delhi to pay respect to Shahjahan. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 234 -5, Vol. II, pp. 599- 601.

49. *DG Chamba*, 1904, pp. 83, 89; S.D.S. Charak, *History and Culture of Himalayan States*, Vol. I, Delhi: Light and Life Publishers, 1978, p.297, Vol. VI, Pathankot, 1988, p. 128 (cited hereafter as *Himalayan States*); Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 234, 301, 303.

50. In the reign of Raja Partap Singh of Chamba (1559-86), there was a war with Raja Chandal Pal of Kangra. The war ended in the defeat of Katoch forces and death of Jit Chand, the younger brother of Kangra Raja. Much booty in horses and elephants was taken, and Chari and Gharoh, two small *parganas* near the Chamba border were annexed. There is a reference of royal *sanad* in which Raja Umed Singh of Chamba was admonished to make over Saif Ali Khan, the Governor of Kangra, the revenue of certain lands belonging to village of Chari in Kangra district of which Raja had taken possession. The letter was dated 1762 A.D. *DG Chamba*, 1904, p. 20; Charak, *Himalayan States*, Vol. I, p. 225; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, vol. I, p. 298; Mahesh Sharma, 'The Region and Empire: Interaction Between Ranjit Singh and Kangra Hill States', *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, Vol. X, No. I, II, United Kingdom (January-December 2003), p. 115 (cited hereafter as *The Region and Empire*), Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 12, C.4.

Kangra, Mandi and Bangahal and salt mines of Gumma between Bangahal and Mandi were other such areas of conflict.⁵¹ A deadly feud ensued between Raja Man Singh of Guler and Jagat Singh of Nurpur. In the records, Man Singh is called 'the mortal enemy of Jagat Singh'. He probably had personal wrongs to avenge, for the Rajas of Guler and Suket are said to have been imprisoned in Delhi, in consequence of false charges levelled against them by Jagat Singh.⁵²

The hill chiefs supported Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Singh Bahadur against the Mughals during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali in the mid eighteenth century hastened the final dissolution of the Mughal Empire. The removal of the Mughal and later the Afghan authority from the Punjab during the late eighteenth century, resulted in political change in the hills. The majority of the hill chiefs became independent during this period. The Sikh chiefs who established their power in the Punjab plains tried to assert suzerain claims over the hill chiefs. However, they were partially successful. The chiefs of three hill principalities namely, Jammu, Chamba and Kangra came into prominence during the late eighteenth century. The chiefs of these principalities became dominant in large parts of the hills at one time or another. In fact, they controlled the internal politics of the hills during this period.

Raja Ranjit Dev was the most outstanding ruler of Jammu. During his reign, Jammu made tremendous progress in socio-economic and political fields. He asserted suzerain claims over a large number of hill principalities namely, Mankot, Akhnur, Kirmchi, Dalpatpur, Bhau, Samba, Tirikot and Jasrota.⁵³ Bhao Singh of Jasrota continued professing submission to Jammu.⁵⁴ Frederic Drew makes the statement that the chiefs of Akhnur, Dalpatpur and Kirmchi paid tribute and rendered military service to Raja Ranjit Dev. 'During a portion of the year, they would be present at Jammu itself, attending the

51. Mahesh Sharma, *The Region and Empire*, p. 115.

52. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 204, 306.

53. Ganesh Das Badehra, *Rajdarshani; A Persian History of North-Western India From Earliest Times to A.D. 1847* (tr. S.D.S. Charak), Jammu: Jay Kay Book House, 1991, pp. 165 (cited hereafter as *Rajdarshani*; Kirpa Ram, *Gulabnama* (tr. S.D.S. Charak), New Delhi: Light and Life Publishers, 1977, pp. 30-40; H.R. Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. IV, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publication, 1982, p. 329; Veena Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy of the Punjab During the Late Eighteenth Century*, New Delhi: Manohar Publication, 1993, p. 83.

54. Charak, *Himalayan States*, Vol. VI, p. 63.

court of the ruler and having separate ones themselves'.⁵⁵ He successfully asserted claims over his neighbours as well: Basohli, Chanehni, Bandralta, Bhadarwah, Bhadu, Bhimbar and Khari-Khariyali.⁵⁶ According to Ganesh Das Badehra, the vassal chieftains used to sit on the left in the court of Ranjit Dev in order of their importance.⁵⁷ In the early 1770s, Ranjit Dev was probably at the height of his power.⁵⁸

Another prominent ruler of the hills during the late eighteenth century was Raj Singh of Chamba. The *parganas* of Bhalai and Jundh had served as point of friction between the States of Chamba and Basohli. Raj Singh of Chamba recovered Bhalai and Jundh in 1782, and imposed a heavy indemnity on the chief of Basohli.⁵⁹ In 1793, Raj Singh obliged Fateh Pal of Bhadarwah to shift his allegiance from the chief of Jammu to himself.⁶⁰ There is an interesting example of the claim of suzerainty by the chief of Chamba over Bhadarwah.⁶¹ In 1786, Raj Singh obliged Togh

55. Frederic Drew, *The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*, Delhi: Oriental Publishers, 1971 (reprint, first published in 1875), p. 87; Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy*, p. 83; J. Rodgers, 'The Coins of Ranjit Deo, King of Jammu, A Hundred Years Ago', *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LIV, part I, (1885), pp. 60-1.

56. Badehra, *Rajdarshani*, p. 165; Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy*, p. 83.

57. Badehra, *Rajdarshani*, p. 164.

58. In 1772, Ranjit Dev sent an army against Ghamand Chand of Kangra. All the petty chiefs on the way acknowledged Ranjit Dev's authority without offering any resistance. Ghamand Chand was defeated with heavy losses. He agreed to pay annual tribute of Rs. 1,90,000 and was made to leave his son, Togh Chand as a hostage in the court for regular payment of tribute. It is interesting to add that the hill chiefs paid tribute to Brajraj Dev as well, who was the son and successor of Ranjit Dev. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-3; Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, p. 417; Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. IV, p. 331; Charak, *A Short History of Jammu Raj*, p. 330.

59. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 70, C. 22; Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy*, p. 12.

60. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 70, C. 22.

61. There is a document in Bhuri Singh Museum at Chamba about an agreement between Raj Singh of Chamba and Fateh Pal of Bhadarwah. Fateh Pal was made to accept the following conditions: 'that he will be faithful to Chamba; whenever summoned, he will come to Chamba; he will not enter into an alliance with Balor (Basohli), Kashtwar and Bandralta and will do nothing without consulting Chamba; the Chamba troops will remain at Bhadarwah and Fateh Pal will provide supplies and give no trouble; if he has any communications from Balor (Basohli), Kashtwar and Bandralta, he will keep the Raja of Chamba fully informed; he will maintain his alliance with Chamba only; his tribute money shall be Rs. 3,000 yearly, which must be regularly paid. Later, Fateh Pal's son and successor Daya Pal of Bhadarwah entered into an agreement with Raj Singh, similar to that of his father. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 624 - 6; Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 70 - 2, C. 22, 33, 42 48; Grover, 'Relationship Between the Sovereign State and Punjab Hill Chiefs During the 17th and 19th Centuries', *Proceedings, Punjab History Conference* (1983), pp. 237-8.

Singh the chief of Kashtwar to become his vassal. Tegh Singh promised Rs. 3,000 as annual tribute.⁶²

More spectacular than the rise of Ranjit Dev and Raj Singh, was that of Sansar Chand of Kangra. 'Sansar Chand had the honour of recovering the Kangra fort from Jai Singh Kanhaiya in 1786. This great achievement was actually his first. When he came to the throne in 1775, he was only ten years old, and the occupation of Kangra was his cherished aspiration'.⁶³ After the occupation of his ancestral fort, he started looking around for territorial aggrandizement. He took over the remaining territory of neighbouring State of Kutlehr.⁶⁴ He obliged the chiefs of Mandi and Kulu to pay five lakh rupees as price of retaining the Bangahal territories they had taken over. Sansar Chand also annexed Paprola and Rajehar from Bir Bangahal. The hill chiefs of the neighbouring States who paid tribute to Sansar Chand were Surma Sen of Mandi, Ranjit Sen of Suket, Bir Singh of Nurpur, Pritam Singh of Kulu, Mahan Chand of Kahlur, Prakash Chand of Guler, Sher Singh of Siba, Gobind Chand of Datarpur and Umed Singh of Jaswan. By the end of the eighteenth century, Sansar Chand was literally a Maharaja, exercising suzerain right over a number of chiefs.⁶⁵ Sansar Chand's oppressive measures aroused a spirit of resistance among all the States of Kangra family. They formed a confederacy against him and through the Raja of Kahlur, invited the Gurkhas to invade Kangra. Raja Bhup Singh of Guler was one of the first to join them with his contingent.⁶⁶

62. *DG Chamba*, 1904, p. 100; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 316. There is a letter dated 1789 from Raja Tegh Singh of Kashtwar to Raj Singh promising allegiance and payment of Rs. 3,000 as annual tribute. Vogel, *Catalogue*, pp. 71-2, C. 38, 40, 50.

63. Sachdeva, *Polity and Economy*, p. 13.

64. The district of Chauki, in Kutlehr State, forming the northern half of the principality, had been seized by Ghamand Chand and Sansar Chand now annexed the southern half. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 79, 177, 180, 181.

65. Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh* (tr. Amarwant Singh, ed. J.S. Grewal & Indu Banga), Vol. II, Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 1985, pp. 22-4; Moorcroft & Trebeck, *Travels*, Vol. I, p. 6; Fauja Singh, *Punjab-di-Sair* (tr. Giani Lal Singh), Patiala: Punjabi University, 1971, p. 54; S.C. Thakur, 'Ranjit Singh's Relations with Sansar Chand of Kangra', *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, p. 131; M.S. Ahluwalia, *History of Himachal Pradesh*, New Delhi: Intellectual Publishing House, 1988, pp. 136, 155; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, pp. 394.

66. All these Rajas took an oath of fidelity to the Gurkhas on the understanding that the Gurkhas were to retain Kangra fort and leave them unmolested in their territories. Letters in the Chamba archives reveal that most of the States on both sides of the Ravi were ready to combine against Kangra. In 1808, Sansar Chand had to approach Ranjit Singh and signed a treaty in the following year. According to this treaty, Ranjit Singh took possession of the fort and sixty-six villages in Kangra valley. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 206, 209, 212, 263.

In the late eighteenth century, we find that there were instances of disputes within the members of the same family. In 1774, a serious dispute arose between Ranjit Dev of Jammu and his eldest son, Brajraj Dev.⁶⁷ There is reference of a war of succession in Chanehni. Raja Tegh Chand had died without any male heir, leaving only a daughter whom her mother sought to be recognized as ruler. This claim was opposed by Dayal Chand, a relative of Tegh Chand. Eventually after the contest, Dayal Chand succeeded to the *gaddi*.⁶⁸ In the late eighteenth century, a dispute between the brothers, Zalim Sen and Ishwari Sen of Mandi caused much injury and loss to the State.⁶⁹

We come across a number of references during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries of the rulers helping each others. Ghamand Chand of Kangra, for instance, was helped by Devi Chand of Kahlur when Kangra was invaded by Abhai Chand of Jaswan.⁷⁰ Raja Ranjit Dev of Jammu helped mother of Raja Raj Singh of Chamba to recover her lost territory.⁷¹ There is reference to a letter from Pritam Singh of Kulu to Raj Singh of Chamba, affirming the ancient amity and friendship between the two States, and

67. Ranjit Dev had set aside Brajraj Dev's claims to the throne, and nominated Brajraj's younger brother, Dalel Singh as the heir-apparent. Brajraj Dev rebelled against his father. The Sikh chiefs of plains were prepared to help both the parties. Brajraj Dev approached the Sikh Chiefs of the plains of the Punjab: Jai Singh, Haqiqat Singh Kanhaiya and Charhat Singh Sukarchakia for assistance. Ranjit Dev called to his help Jhanda Singh Bhangi of Amritsar and the rulers of Chamba, Nurpur, Basohli and Kangra. Jhanda Singh Bhangi got killed in the battle. On the death of their chief, the Bhangis retired from the Jammu camp. The Sukarchakia and Kanhaiya Sikhs also abandoned the enterprise. Thus Ranjit Dev and his son were left to settle dispute between themselves. Kanhaiya Lal, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, p.418; George Forster, *A Journey From Bengal to England through the Northern Part of India, Kashmire, Afghanistan and Persia and into Russia by the Caspian Sea*, Vol. I, Patiala: Punjab Languages Department, 1970(reprint), pp. 286 (cited hereafter as *A Journey*); H.T.Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab and Political Life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Patiala: Punjab Languages Department, 1970, pp. 30, 237-40; G.C.Smyth(ed.), *A History of Reigning Family of Lahore, with Some Account of the Jummoo Rajahs, the Seik Soldiers and their Sirdars*, Calcutta: W. Thacker & Co., 1847, p. 247; S.M.Latif, *History of the Punjab*, New Delhi: Eurasia Publishers, 1964, p. 298; K. M. Pannikar, *The Founding of Kashmir State, A Biography of Maharaja Gulab Singh 1792-1858*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1935, p.11.

68. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 582.

69. Zalim Sen was engaged in intrigues against his brother. He had offered to pay a large tribute to Ranjit Singh, if made Raja in place of his brother. Griffin, *Rajas of Punjab*, p. 641; Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 395.

70. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 504.

71. Mother of Raj Singh was a Jammu princess. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p.314.

promising mutual help.⁷² There is a letter dated 1780 from Sansar Chand, which states that Kangra, Guler and Chamba were united for mutual defence and offence)⁷³ An agreement dated 1786 exists between Chamba, Kahlur and Mandi to conquer the State of Kulu.⁷⁴ A copper plate exists recording treaty of friendship between Raj Singh of Chamba and Sansar Chand of Kangra in 1788.⁷⁵ Pritam Singh of Kulu promised assistance to Jit Singh of Chamba in a united attack on Kangra.⁷⁶ During the last decade of the eighteenth century, Sansar Chand of Kangra, Pritam Singh of Kulu and Bikrama Sen of Suket had joined their resources to invade Mandi.⁷⁷ There is reference of an agreement between Shamsheer Sen of Mandi, Sansar Chand of Kangra and Raj Singh of Chamba to attack Kulu and seize Bangahal and divide it equally among them, each taking the portion nearest to his own territory.⁷⁸

The States of Chamba and Nurpur had good relations with each other. A letter of year 1802 mentions that Nurpur and Chamba combined their resources to fight against Kangra.⁷⁹ Charhat Singh of Chamba, not only helped Bir Singh of Nurpur but also guided him on several occasions.⁸⁰ A revolt occurred in Kahlur and Raja Ugar Sen of Suket helped Kahlur Raja in 1838, by giving loan of Rs.25,000 with which the Kahlur Raja raised a regiment of Pathans for the suppression of the revolt.⁸¹

In retrospect, we may notice that the hill chiefs formed matrimonial and political alliances within their groups and also outside it. They extended help not only to their own kinsmen to fight against the outsiders, but also to their neighbours. Though the hill chiefs formed these alliances, but they suffered from the common human frailties of greed and acquisition. In fact their alliances were meant to serve these ends. The ambitious among the chiefs tried to establish their hegemony over the surrounding areas within the group and sometimes even on their neighbours. To achieve such objectives, the alliances

72. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 69, C. 19.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 70, C. 24.

74. *DG Mandi*, 1920, p.43nl; *DG Kangra*, 1917, part II, p. 31; Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 71, C. 39.

75. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 11, B. 36.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 73, C. 51.

77. *Imperial Gazetteer, Punjab*, part II, p. 393; Griffin, *Rajas of Punjab*, p.639.

78. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 69, C. 18.

79. Mankot, Bhadarwah, Jasrota and Kashtwar extended their help against Kangra. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 73, C. 52.

80. Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 74, C. 62-4.

81. Hutchison & Vogel, *Hill States*, Vol. I, p. 366.

formed by them were very helpful. It was but natural that such ambitions gave rise to rivalries within the group and even outside the group. Sometimes these disputes were carried over from one generation to another. So much so that the powerful among them started occupying territories of their neighbours. The chiefs of three principalities of Jammu, Chamba and Kangra came into prominence. Raja Ranjit Dev of Jammu, Raja Raj Singh of Chamba and Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra became dominant in large parts of the hills at one time or another during the late eighteenth century. In other words, they controlled the internal politics of the hills.

THE CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN THE PUNJAB (1945) : ROLE OF SHIROMANI AKALI DAL

*Baljit Singh**

The Local Self-Government was instituted in 1882 in the Punjab. Consequently, the elective system was introduced for the management of new administrative structures with an avowed objective "to secure a fair representation of all classes". For voting and holding office, property or taxation and educational qualifications were mandated. Nevertheless, the principle of nomination also operated whenever due representation was found wanting.¹ The Legislative Council for the Punjab was constituted on 1st November 1897 after the gap of thirty six years under the Indian Council Act of 1861 which gave legislative councils to Bombay and Madras.² The first time the elective principle was introduced to select representatives for legislative bodies with the introduction of reforms which went under the Minto-Morley Reforms Scheme of 1909.³ The Government of India Act of 1919 popularly called the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms made substantial changes in the structure and the functioning of the central and provincial legislatures.⁴ With the objective of introducing provincial autonomy, the British Government passed the Government of India Act 1935.⁵

Of all the provinces of British India, the Punjab was the slowest to respond to schemes of self government; and of the third community of the Punjab, the Sikhs, were the least responsive. The Punjabi Hindus and Muslims had the benefit of the guidance of enlightened Hindus and Muslims from other parts of India. The Sikhs had no political teachers.⁶ Before the 1920s,

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1. M.S. Iqbal, *Development of Local Self Government in the Punjab (1882-1900)*, University of the Punjab, Lahore, 1976, pp. 31-33.
2. K.C. Yadav, *Elections in Punjab (1920-47)*, Delhi, 1978, p. 3.
3. Khushwant Singh, *A History of The Sikhs (1839-1964)*, Vol. II, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1966, p. 218.
4. A.C. Banerjee, *The Constitutional History of India*, Vol. III, Meerut, 1978, p. 13.
5. K.C. Yadav, *op.cit.*, p. 7.
6. Khushwant Singh, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 217.

there was not any political body of the Sikhs except the Chief Khalsa Diwan which was formed in 1902. But the Chief Khalsa Diwan did not have a mass base. When mass agitation started among different communities to gain the political concessions from the British Government, the Chief Khalsa Diwan could hardly provide a viable political organization to lead the Sikhs. Meanwhile, the Akali Dal came forward to fill the vacuum.⁷ The Shiromani Akali Dal was founded on 10th December 1920 at Amritsar.⁸ Administratively, the Punjab was divided into 29 districts grouped in five divisions of five or six districts each. In the three of the five divisions, the Muslims were in majority. Two of these were Muslim majority divisions Multan and Rawalpindi with a population roughly nine million Muslims and two million Hindus and Others. The third division of Lahore was much more mixed and of its total population seven million; four million were Muslims and three million Hindus and "Others". In Amritsar District, the Muslims were not in a majority. In two other districts, Lahore and Gurdaspur, the Sikhs owned much of the land and enjoyed a political and economic strength disproportionate to their number.⁹

After the failure of the Simla Conference in July 1945 things began to drift at great speed. On August 21, 1945, Lord Wavell announced that the elections to the provincial and central legislatures would be held in the coming winter.¹⁰ After that statement all the political parties started their activities in order to win the forthcoming elections.

The Central Legislative Assembly elections, held in the Punjab in November 1945, were important in themselves because the election propaganda and slogans of various parties were different from those of previous and after the partition elections. These elections surcharged the political parties for the Provincial Legislative Assembly elections and result of that election had effected the provincial election results as well. The present paper attempts to delineate the politics of the Shiromani Akali Dal during the Central Legislative Assembly Elections of 1945 in the Punjab.

The Akali leaders called a meeting at Gujranwala on 29 September 1945

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7. B.M. Bhatia, *History and Social Development: Elites in Modern India*. Vol. 1, Vikas Publishing, Delhi, 1974, p. 336.
 8. J.S. Grewal, *The Akalis: A Short History*, Punjab Studies Publications, Chandigarh. 1996, 29.
 9. David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control (1920-1932)*, OUP, Delhi, 1999, pp. 3, 12. Nicholas Manserbh (eds.), *The Transfer of Power (1942-47)*, Vol. VI, UB5, New Delhi, 1976, p. 44.
 10. Amarjit Singh, "The Provincial Elections 1946: A Case Study of the Punjab", *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, Twenty Third Session, March 18-20. 1997, p. 211.

and decided to contest the coming general elections to the provincial and central legislatures which were to form the basis of the proposed constitution making body whose decisions were bound to have far-reaching effects on the future of the *Panth*.¹¹ The Conference authorized Master Tara Singh to constitute a Sikh Election Board in consultation with the leaders of all important groups in the community. Master Tara Singh called a conference at Gujranwala and elected six members of the Board. It would give the tickets to the candidates who were to contest the coming elections. The six members of the Board were directly or indirectly related to the Akali Dal. They did not involve any other Sikh parties or sects in this Board like the Central Akali Dal. Namdhari Darbar, Ramgarhia Central Federation, All India Lubana Sikh League, Sikh Youth League and Kisan Sabha.¹² There was clear indication that the Akali Dal like the Muslim League party would prove to the British Government and other parties that the Akali Party only represented the Sikh masses. Consequently, Sardar Kahan Singh, Secretary to the Holiness Baba Hara Singh, Guru of the Narankari Sikhs, the Chief Khalsa Diwan, All India Sikh League, Central Akali Dal and Ramgarhia Federation appealed the voters to cast vote only for those who contested from the Congress ticket.

Master Tara Singh said that freedom would be of little avail if British domination is to be substituted by either the Muslim or the Hindu domination. He did not believe in strengthening the Muslim domination first under the garb of freedom and fighting against the Communists. He favoured freedom in which the Sikh community would also be free. He wanted to see the *Panth* and country free and secondly he wanted '*Panthic* well-being as the main thing'.¹³ That was the same position of the Muslim League. Both the parties created doubts in the minds of the masses that they would not be free under the Hindu/Muslim domination. But everyone ignored that there were many differences within each community even among some political parties. Babu Labh Singh said in Gujranwala, "The Khalsa *Panth* was created by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Without the Shiromani Akali Dal no other party could be considered as the *Panthic Party*".¹⁴ Addressing an Akali Conference in village Gurusar Satlani, Jathedar Mohan Singh, President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandak Committee and some other leaders also delivered vigorous speeches

11. Raghbir Singh, *Akali Movement (1926-47)*, Omsons Publications, New Delhi, 1997, p. 98.

12. *Prem Sundesh*, 24 October 1945.

13. *The Tribune*, 1 September 1945.

14. *Fateh*, 19 November 1945.

discussing the significance of the *Panthic* ticket. They also asserted that the Sikhs who had been given separate rights after such a great struggle could not entrust their fate to the other communities. The two resolutions were adopted urging the people to support the nominees of the *Panth* and demanding lenient treatment to the Indian National Army.¹⁵ Not only the Akalis, but also the Indian National Congress leaders highlighted the Indian National Army issue not for their sacrifice but to gain the votes because a large number of Indian National Army men were enrolled in the voters' list.

On 27 August 1945, the Akali Dal started election campaign. A Conference was held in Guru Ka Bagh under the Presidentship of Sardar Hem Singh Thekadar. Master Tara Singh, Giani Kartar Singh MLA and Sardar Kartar Singh Advocate delivered their impressive speeches in the Conference. Kartar Singh said that one thing which the Sikh community could never ignore is that if the candidates would be selected in the Assembly who are in favour of non-Sikh communities then our existence would end and reservation we got would also be meaningless. I only say to the Sikh brethren they should not come behind the emotions and see the truth and work only for *Panthic* interests.' Master Tara Singh appealed the people to unite for the *Panthic* interest at this critical juncture.¹⁶

The Akali Party had been supporting the Congress party on every issue, but contested these elections independently. There were many reasons but important of them were that they had doubts about their decisions against the Pakistan demand. Secondly, the Congress party put up candidates on the Sikh seats. Thirdly, they wanted to utilize their reservation and fourthly, the Akali Dal only represented the Sikh community. Ganga Singh said that the Sikhs would exercise their right to vote carefully as this time their legislators had to shape their destination. He asked the Sikhs to pledge before Guru Granth Sahib to vote for the Akali candidates. He appealed to the Congress to have the Akalis free to fight the election at the same time that the Sikhs were with the Congress as far as the fight for freedom of the country was concerned.¹⁷ The Congress wanted to put up candidates for the Sikh seats. This meant the right of separate representation, as felt by the Sikh, should be vitiated and Sikh representatives should exercise not for the good of the community but under the dictation of a party, which had no faith in *Panthic* organization. By voting the Congress candidates, the Sikhs would only prove

15. *The Tribune*, 23 October 1945.

16. *Akali*, 29 August 1945.

17. *The Tribune*, 1 October 1945.

the absurdity of their demand for separate representation, if the Congress wanted to foist Pakistan on them under the guise of the Rajaji-Gandhi Formula. Such Sikh representatives would have no other course but to vote for Pakistan.¹⁸ The Congress party also bent to the Pakistan scheme to have agreed with the Muslim League. Which candidates would be selected from their tickets mean that portion of the *Panth* accepted the Pakistan Scheme.¹⁹ Master Tara Singh regretted that though the Congress talked so much against communalism, yet by signing the Lucknow Pact (1916) it had accepted the principle of communal rights and Sikhs had been ignored at that time.²⁰ Master Tara Singh said that "if we give the vote to the Congress the meaning of this would be that we should not want separate representation. It is clear that if the Sikh leaders will be successful on the Congress tickets, the identity of the Sikh *Panth* would abolish. I asked a Britishman of Simla why the Hindu Sabha was not called which was the organization of the Hindus. He replied that the Congress is a represented body of the Hindu people because the common people gave vote to the Congress. The Sikhs who gave votes to the Congress also represent the Sikhs".²¹

The main slogan of the Akalis was that "Free *Panth* and Free country".²² Giani Kartar Singh said that their main objection against Pakistan was that it aimed at destroying the Sikhs. The Hindus had nothing to fear from Pakistan because they would have a vast Hindu state, so also the Muslims. But of 57 lakh of Sikhs, 51 lakh who resided in the Punjab would be slaves of Muslims.²³ Master Tara Singh wrote to the British Premier Clement Attlee that "the cry of Pakistan is being raised more and more loudly by the Muslim League steadily deteriorating communal feelings in the Punjab."²⁴ The anti-Pakistan feelings of the Akalis can be understood from the assessment of the situation made by the Governor of Punjab Sir B.J. Glancy: "If Pakistan becomes an imminent reality, we shall be heading straight for bloodshed on a wide scale: non-Muslims, especially Sikhs are not bluffing. They will not submit peacefully to a government that is labeled Mohammedan *Raj*".²⁵ He also noticed 'general

18. *Akali*, 30 August 1945.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *The Tribune*, 20 October 1945.

21. *Akali*, 30 August 1945.

22. *The Tribune*, 2 October 1945.

23. *Prem Sandesh*, 31 October 1945.

24. Nicholas Mansergh (eds.), *op.cit.*, pp. 424-425.

25. Viscount Wavell to Pathick-Lawrence, New Delhi, 29 October 1945: *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, p. 422.

uneasiness' among the Sikhs.²⁶

In the Gujrawala Conference, Sardar Mangal Singh MLA, said that the S.G.P.C. had decided to resist Pakistan to the last man. Sardar Baldev Singh said that "even the Muslim League promised to build houses of gold for the Sikhs, they would refuse to live in it".²⁷ Mr. M.A. Jinnah laid claim to the Punjab as "the cornerstone of his Pakistan". The Sikh community stands unequivocally pledged to fight this Scheme. "The Punjab is a homeland of Sikhs. The Sikh vote can and shall be thrown only one side that is prepared to treat the Sikhs as equals".²⁸ Ian Talbot describes that even before the electioneering began The Muslim League was in a strong position. This resulted not for the popular support for Pakistan from war time developments at the centers which had transformed its position in the Punjab.²⁹

The Akali leaders said that the Sikh representatives in the provincial elections were only member representatives of the Sikhs and owing allegiance to the *Panth* could serve the interests of the country and truly safeguard the interests of the *Panth*. The *Panth* appealed to all Sikhs to lend their full support to the candidates selected by the Board. "As the issues involved in this election are vital and therefore, it is essential that the *Panth* would speak with one voice and develop the maximum strength to cope with the problems that are to arise in the near future"³⁰

The Muslim League Party contested these elections on the 'Pakistan' issue and for this they would prove that the Punjab Muslims were with M.A. Jinnah and Punjab was 'the cornerstone' of Pakistan. Secondly, they would not need to go far plebiscite on the issue of Pakistan or division of the country because these elections would play this role clearly. So this time was more challengeable for the Sikh leadership and the Sikh masses because they were in a minority and not only contested for their community interests but also to fight to resist the 'Pakistan' demand which would be more harmful for them. The Akalis also did propaganda against the communist party which supported the Muslim League's Pakistan demand. At Guru Ka Bagh, Sh. Harbans Singh Ahilkara delivered a speech and said that the Communists have deviated from religion, and Sikhism. Sh. Atma Singh said that it is only the *Panthic* party which makes the *Panth* successful in every field. So the

26 B.J. Glancy to Lord Wavell, 16 August 1945: *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, pp. 71-73.

27. *The Tribune*, 3 October 1945.

28. *The Tribune*, 30 September 1945.

29. Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj (1849-1947)*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1988, p. 201.

30. *Akali*, 10 October 1945.

candidates who would stand from the Shiromani Akali Dal means the candidates of the *Panth*. So it is the duty of every Sikh to cast vote in favour of the *Panthic* candidate. The Communists did open propaganda in favour of Pakistan.³¹ The Akalis did not have a big challenge from the Communists because they supported the Pakistan issue; so the later lost their grips on the farmers who basically belonged to the Sikh community. Secondly, in these elections, the religious issues were highlighted not only by the Akalis but also by the Muslims League, Hindu Sabha and other political parties rather than the economic issues which the Communist party stressed upon.

In a Conference, the Shiromani Akali Dal came to claiming that it had two aims; (i) reforms of *gurdwaras*, and (ii) freedom of the Country. We have solved one matter and later we should solve the other. Master Tara Singh put four questions to the Communists:

- (i) Do they believe in Sikh Religion?
- (ii) Do they accept Hindustan their country?
- (iii) Why had they acted against in the country in 1942; and
- (iv) Why do they favour Pakistan?

But comrade Harbans Singh did not give any answer of these questions.³² So in the election, every party wanted to capture all the seats by fair or foul means which were reserved for their community. The Akalis also ignored their past decisions when they compromised under the Sikandar-Baldev Pact (1942) with the Unionist party which was not in the country's interest but only to gain benefit for their community.

Moreover, the Akali Dal for the time being, abandoned its Azad Punjab slogan which was against the Muslim League's Pakistan demand and entered the elections without any demand of Sikh homeland, for the safeguarding of the rights, language, culture and traditions of the great Sikh people.³³

In many places, voters came out in the form of groups accompanied by brass band carrying flag in their hands and shouted loudly.³⁴ The wine (mostly country liquor) and money were freely used in the election. At one polling station, voters were brought for Rs. 200 each and actually amount of Rs. 3,000 was paid for buying 15 votes.³⁵

31. *Akali*, 30 August 1945.

32. *Akali*, 12 December 1945.

33. Ajeet Javed, *Left Politics in Punjab (1935-47)*, Durga, Delhi, 1988, p. 222.

34. *The Tribune*, 25 November 1945.

35. *The Tribune*, 3 December 1945.

Out of total 12 seats 4 candidates were elected unopposed, three were the Muslim League and one the Congress candidates. For eight seats there were only 22 candidates. The Congress party captured the all 3 non-Muhammdan seats; the Muslim League got 6 Muhammadan seats. The Akali Party two Sikh Seats and only one independent candidate was selected on the Punjab Landlords' constituencies. Out of the total 24,897 Sikh votes, the *Panthic* candidates got 63 per cent, the Congress candidates got 30.5 per cent votes.³⁶

Central Legislative Assembly Election Results (1945)³⁷

Parties	Unopposed	Contested	Total
Muslim League	3	3	6
Indian National Congress	1	2	3
The Akali Dal	0	2	2
Hindu Mahasabha	0	0	0
Khaksar	0	0	0
Independent	0	1	1
Total	4	8	12

So it is clear from above mentioned propaganda and results that the Muslim League represented the Muslims, the Congress to the Hindus and the Akali Dal, the Sikhs. The main propaganda was going for the Sikh seats rather than the Muslims because the Sikh community feared from the Congress party and their stands against these elections. So, the Muslim League had no challenge from the other party because the Khaksar had no hold on the masses. These elections also cleared that like the Muslim League, the Akali Dal also wanted to safeguard their community interests and identity first from even the freedom of the country. The *Panthic* slogans of Akalis were very helpful for them as if they would not contest on the Sikh *Panth* their community and *Panth* would not be safe. The economic issues were not deeply touched by the Akali Party whereas there were food shortages and other lack of necessity goods due to the World War II. These elections not only surcharged the Akali Dal but also the Nationalist Sikhs who favoured the Congress party. The Akalis and other political parties contested the next elections on the same issues because in the first battle they were successful. In the Punjab Legislative Assembly elections of 1946, the Congress and Nationalist Sikhs

36. K.C. Yadav, *Election in Punjab (1920-47)*, pp. 34-35.

37. *Ibid.*

minimized the total gap and got 41.41 per cent Sikh votes against the Akali Party which got 43.02 per cent Sikh votes within only the three months gap.³⁸ Resultantly, the Central Legislative Assembly elections of 1945 provided an ample opportunity to the Shiromani Akali Dal to introduce Panthic programme on the trial basis which paid rich dividends. The Akalis broad based their propaganda in the Punjab Legislative Assembly Elections in 1946. The Akali Dal emerged as the custodian of the *Panthic* interests.

38. *Fateh*, 13 April 1946.

RURAL AND URBAN REHABILITATION IN THE EAST PUNJAB: 1947-1957 A.D.

*Subhash Maini**

On the 15th August 1947 the partition of the Punjab was implemented. During the five months from August to December 1947, the provinces of East and West Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province and Sind were convulsed with the pangs of a terrible fratricidal war. Killing, burning, looting and abduction was taking place everywhere. The two-way mass movement of the population added to the miseries. The Muslims travelled west-ward to Pakistan. The non-Muslims left Pakistan for India. Millions of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were forced to leave their homes and migrate to the soil of the newly born dominion of India and Pakistan.¹

The strangest event in India's history, the partition, flooded its bisected parts with refugees. On 3 June 1947 a white paper was issued which gave the details of the plan. The price for freedom was the partitioning of India. Pakistan was carved out of India.² Sind, N.W.F.P. and 16 districts of the Punjab formed the West-Pakistan. The remaining 13 districts of the then Punjab remained in India.³

The exact boundary line between India and Pakistan was to be demarcated by a boundary commission. Except in the disputed border districts like Gurdaspur, Lahore and Ferozpur the people everywhere else knew at this stage on which side of the boundary line they had been placed.⁴

There had been serious and widespread communal riots in the Punjab. A state of acute communal tension existed in two districts of Rawalpindi division. These riots had even spread to the country side. In the cities the well to do families and others who could conveniently do so, talked of migrating to territories which were to form part of India. There was little stir in the

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1. G.D. Khosla, *Stern Reckoning*, (The Partition Omnibus), Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002, p. 3.
2. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, Longmans, Green and Co. Toronto, U.S.A., 1960, p. 224.
3. M.S. Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes*, (An Account of the Rehabilitation of Refugees from West Pakistan in Rural Areas of East Punjab), New Jack. Pvt. Ltd., Bombay 13, p. 4.
4. *Loc. cit.*

rural areas. Because of the communal continuousness the shadow of impending Muslim rule in Pakistan caused loss to non-Muslims.⁵

In July 1947 lawyers from both sides argued before the Boundary Commission at Lahore the claims of India and Pakistan to various Tehsils and districts of central Punjab, but strangely enough none of the lawyers even hinted at the possibility of the migration of population.⁶ The rival claims of the Sikhs and Hindus on one side and Muslims on the other for the districts of the central Punjab were advocated by their leaders with considerable passion and their emotions were shared by their followers.⁷

The Redcliffe Award drew a line as a result of which 13 district comprising the whole of the Jalandhar and Ambala divisions as well three tehsils of the Gurdaspur district were allocated to East Punjab.⁸ As a result of the partition, East Punjab "obtained about 45 per cent of the population, 38 per cent of the area and 31 per cent of the income of the united province. West Punjab on the other hand, obtained "about 55 per cent of the population, 62 per cent of the area and about 69 per cent of the income of the old province.⁹ It retained the important canals and about 70 per cent of the fertile canal-irrigated tracts along with important forests, mineral resources and a large number of exclusive industries of the undivided province.¹⁰

The West Punjab was fortunate also in getting the only university as well as the principal educational, medical, technical, veterinary and agricultural institutions of the province. West Punjab had therefore, emerged comparatively bigger, richer and more food-producing. It had a density of just 256.5 per square miles and as compared with 338 in East Punjab. The irrigated area of the undivided province only 26 per cent was situated in East Punjab.¹¹

The population of the united Punjab as recorded at the census of 1941, was 28.4 millions, comprising 16.2 million Muslims, 7.5 million Hindus and 3.7 million Sikhs (the rest of the population was made up of the Christian, etc.) The western districts were predominantly Muslim while the eastern districts were predominantly Hindu, or perhaps more correctly non-Muslim. In the central districts the communities were evenly divided.¹²

5. "Line of Division Real and Imagined", *The Tribune*, 25 September 2006, p. 8.

6. M.S Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes*, p. 5.

7. *Loc. cit.*

8. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

9. Suresh, Kamra, *Bearing Witness (Partition, Independence, End of the Raj)*, Lotus Roli, New Delhi, 2002, p. 316.

10. *Loc. cit.*

11. M.S Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes*, p. 8

12. G.D. Khosla, *Stern Reckoning*, p. 90

The Sikhs were concentrated for the most part of the central districts of Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Ferozepur, Amritsar, Lahore, Montgomery, Sheikhupura, Lyallpur and Gujranwala. The population in the towns did not show a pronounced bias in favour of any particular community though non-Muslim interests in property, commerce and industry predominated in all the urban areas.¹³

The total non-Muslims population of west Punjab in 1941 was 43,51,477 while the total Muslim population of East Punjab was 42,86,755.¹⁴ The percentage of Muslims and Non-Muslims population in the districts of East and West Punjab is given in the following table:

East Punjab

Districts or States	Percentage in total population of		
	Muslims	Sikhs	Rest
1. Hissar	28.2	6.8	64.8
2. Rohtak	17.2	0.1	81.7
3. Gurgaon	33.5	..	66.8
4. Karnal	30.6	2.0	67.0
5. Ambala	31.6	18.4	48.7
6. Simla	18.2	2.7	74.3
7. Kangra	5.1	0.6	94.3
8. Hoshiarpur	32.5	16.9	49.8
9. Jalandhar	45.2	26.4	27.6
10. Ludhiana	36.9	41.7	21.4
11. Ferozpur	45.1	33.7	20.2
12. Amritsar	46.5	36.1	15.4
13. Gurdaspur	50.2	19.1	25.2

East Punjab States	Muslims	Sikhs	Rest
1. Kapurthala	56.4	25.9	16.3
2. Faridkot	30.7	57.7	10.9
3. Patiala	22.6	47.3	30.9
4. Jind	14.1	11.3	74.2
5. Nabha	20.7	36.0	42.9

13. *Loc.cit*

14. M.S Radhawa, *Out of the Ashes*, p. 9.

West Punjab Districts

Districts	Muslims	Sikhs	Rest
1. Lahore	60.7	18.3	16.8
2. Sialkot	62.1	11.7	19.4
3. Gujranwala	70.4	10.9	11.9
4. Sheikhupura	63.6	18.9	10.5
5. Gujarat	85.6	6.4	7.7
6. Shahpur	83.7	4.8	10.2
7. Jhelum	89.5	3.9	6.5
8. Rawalpindi	80.0	8.2	10.5
9. Attock	90.5	3.0	6.4
10. Mianwali	86.2	1.4	12.4
11. Montgomery	69.1	13.9	15.9
12. Lyallpur	62.8	18.8	14.6
13. Jhang	82.6	1.5	15.8
14. Multan	78.0	4.2	16.9
15. Muzaffargarh	86.5	0.8	12.8
16. Dera-Ghazi Khan	88.9	0.2	11.7

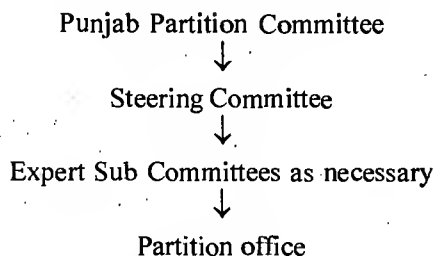
In a meeting of the cabinet held on 6 June 1947, the Viceroy Lord Mountbatten, produced a thirty-three page document prepared by his staff entitled "The Administrative Consequences of Partition" before the party leaders. Under the plan a special committee of the cabinet was formed to be known as partition council. It worked through administrative machinery consisting of the steering committee and the expert committee.¹⁵

The special committee in its meeting of 12 June, 1947, directed the province to set up partition machinery generally on the central lines.¹⁶ The Governor of the Punjab, Evan Jenkins called a meeting of the leaders of the political parties-Khan Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, Bhim Sen Sachar and Sardar Sawarn Singh- on 16 June, 1947, to discuss the matters relating to the partition of the Punjab. It was agreed that the partition machinery should be on the central lines:¹⁷

15. *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV, pp. 5-7, 10-13, 19-21, 48, 188.

16. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 19.

17. Satya M. Rai, *Punjab Since Partition*, Durga Publications, Delhi, 1986, p. 87.



The Punjab Partition Committee consisted of two representatives from the West Punjab Zone and two from East Punjab Zone with the Governor as its Chairman. It held first meeting on 1 July, 1947, and met 24 times before the partition. The frequency, however, went down in the post-partition days and it held only 8 meetings.¹⁸ Till November, 1956. The Punjab Partition Committee was generally guided by the recommendations made by the Expert Committees. These Expert Committees were extra-departmental bodies which were required to report to the Partition Committee through the Steering Committee. There were in all seven Expert Committees as under¹⁹

1. Committee 'A' on Financial Assets and Liabilities.
2. Committee 'B' on Physical Assets.
3. Committee 'C' on Services and Records.
4. Committee 'D' on use of Institutions of Provincial importance.
5. Committee 'E' on Civil Supplies.
6. Committee 'F' on Budget and Accounts.
7. Committee 'G' on Contracts.

The work relating to the partition was given top priority. Accordingly, the partition committee and the expert committees were required to work at top speed. Some of the important issues were.²⁰

1. The option to services other than the Secretary of State and Provincial Services to serve in the East or the West Punjab.
2. The allocation of officers-All India Civil Services, Provincial Services, Police and the like to the two provinces.
3. The future of the Board of Economic Enquiry.
4. The Partition of the High Court, Lahore.

18. *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV, Meetings of Implementation Committee (Partition Branch Records) Sikh History Research Department, Khalsa College, Amritsar.

19. *Reports of Expert Committees in Connection with the Partition of Punjab Province*, Hereafter referred to as *Expert Committee Reports*, Lahore, p. 1.

20. *The Agenda of the Meetings of the Partition Committee*, 1 July to 15 August 1947, Lahore, pp. 1-24.

5. The question of the continuance of the scheme for the grant of scholarship for studies abroad and of financial adjustments between the East and the West Punjab Governments.
6. The division of assets and liabilities of the Panjab University.
7. The question of the future of the Sikh Gurdwara Tribunal.
8. The question of finding accommodation for the East Punjab Government.
9. Questions like working of Mandi Hydro-Electric System, division of historical records, financial assets and liabilities.

It was decided that the services recruited on a district, division or circle basis might remain where they happened to be on the date of partition. The Partition Committee gave assurance to the employees that it would make adjustments according to the wishes and convenience of individuals within a reasonable time. The all India services and provincial services, however, had been given the option to service in either of the two provinces. This decision had to be altered on the recommendation of the special committee of the cabinet, Government of India, which suggested that every government servant should be given the opportunity to select the government he wished to serve. Accordingly, the Partition Committee gave option to all the government employees.

The replies received from all officers indicated that generally speaking the Hindu and Sikh officers opted for the East Punjab and Muslim officers for services in the West Punjab. Only a few officers, mostly Europeans were prepared to serve on either sides.²¹

The Expert Committee working under the central steering committee of the Government of India had issued a directive that every government servant should be given the opportunity to select the government he wishes to serve and cadres be separated accordingly.²² In the light of the directive, it was decided by the Punjab Partition Committee to give option to every government official to express his choice whatever he was to serve the West Punjab government or the East Punjab Government. It was also decided that no official was to be victimized because of the intention expressed by him of serving a particular government. For the reorganization of the East Punjab and the West Punjab Secretariats the Government of the Punjab appointed Mr. Ram Chandra and Akhtar Hussian for reorganization of their respective

21. *The Agenda of the Meetings of the Partition Committee*, 1 July to 11 August 1947, Lahore, pp. 26-27.

22. *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. I, p. 18.

Secretariats.²³ The Punjab Partition Committee appointed two judges of the High Court, one Muslim and one non-Muslim (Justice M. Sharif and Justice G.D. Khosla) to study the legal implications of the Panjab University holding jurisdiction over both the parts of the Punjab or, alternatively, to suggest steps the government might take to negotiate and give effect to the partition of the university.²⁴

Opinion was divided about the division of the assets of the university. S.A. Lal, Secretary, Legislative Assembly, argued, that the question of division of assets and liabilities did not arise. The Panjab University was a corporate body, it must, therefore, remain under the jurisdiction of the West Punjab legislature. In support of his case he quoted the case of the Bombay University in 1928 when it was separated from Sind.²⁵ G.C. Chatterjee, M.G. Singh and R.C. Soni, the non-Muslim members in the committee, were of the opinion that the Government was legally authorized to dissolve the Panjab University and create at any time before 15 August, 1947 two universities in its place.²⁶ The Government of India's steering committee agreed with the view point expressed by S. Lal. It was agreed that there should be no physical division of assets, though the records and other such things had to be divided.²⁷

The question of the division of the Punjab High Court, Lahore, was referred to the central steering committee. In its communication, dated July 4, 1947 the committee gave the following suggestions which were accepted by the Punjab Partition Committee: -

1. The jurisdiction of the Lahore High Court should from the date of the partition be limited to the West Punjab only.
2. A separate High Court having jurisdiction over the East Punjab and the province of Delhi should be constituted.
3. Appointments to the new High Court should, as for the existing High Courts, be made by his majesty after consulting the central government of the dominion.
4. It would be necessary to give an opportunity to the judges, officers and the staff of the Lahore High Court to choose which of the two high courts they wished to serve.
5. Both the East Punjab and the West Punjab high courts should have

23. *Decisions of the Punjab Partition Committee*, p. 9.

24. *Ibid.*, Item No. 8, 1 July 1947.

25. *The Agenda for the Meetings of the Partition Committee*, p. 83.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 144-147.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

their seats at Lahore and function in the buildings occupied by the Lahore High Court upto the 1st March, 1948.²⁸

In order to settle the disputed issues which provincial partition committee could not decide, the governor-general established an Arbitral Tribunal. Patrick Spens, the chief justice of the Federal Court, was appointed its chairman.²⁹ The Arbitral Tribunal order was issued on August 12, 1947. Justice Kania and Justice Mohammad Ismail were appointed representing India and Pakistan respectively.³⁰ It was to decide cases referred to it before December 1, 1947, or with the permission of the chairman before January 1, 1948.

The following decisions were made by the partition council regarding the Arbitral Tribunal:

1. The Tribunal was to be located at Delhi or could shift its office elsewhere with the concurrence of both the governments.
2. The Tribunal could appoint its own staff.
3. The parties on either side of the case would be represented by their counsel.
4. The target date for the completion of the work of the Tribunal was fixed March 31, 1948.³¹

The division of the assets and liabilities to the west Punjab and the east Punjab proved to be one of the most complicated problems since both the governments had vital differences. The case was referred to the Arbitral Tribunal where both the parties argued their cases. The representation of the west Punjab argued that each part should get a share equal to its respective contributions to the general revenue. They argued that the east Punjab got only thirty-eight per cent of the area and contributed only thirty-one per cent to the general revenue of the united Punjab and, hence the east Punjab was only entitled to thirty-one per cent of the assets.

The representations of the east Punjab contented that every citizen of the state should have the right to claim an equal share of the assets of the motherland and the ratio for the division of the assets should be based on the respective population of their parent province in the ratio of 44.4 and 55.6 per cent respectively which should be made the basis for division of the assets.³²

28. *Agenda for Meetings of the Punjab Partition Committee*, Item No. 3, 14 August 1947, pp. 57-58.

29. *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV, Case No. PC\55\6\47, p. 186.

30. *Speeches and Documents on Indian Constitution*, Vol. II, p. 703.

31. *Partition Proceedings*, Vol. IV, (Case No. PC\55\6\47), p. 186.

32. *East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. 1, p. 9.

The matter was referred to the expert committee.³³ The committee was to report on:

1. The nature and approximate amount of the division of financial assets and liabilities.
2. The possible methods of apportioning them between the two governments.
3. Any other matter relevant to the financial aspects of partition. The assets and liabilities could be broadly decided as:

Assets comprising cash balance with the Reserve Bank, treasuries and sub-treasuries, balance invested in Government of India securities, loans and advances by government, state provident funds and the like. Physical Assets were described as:

- a. Productive: irrigation works, crown waste lands, forests and works of electricity branch and the like.
- b. Unproductive: roads, bridges, buildings, and the like.
- c. Stores and supplies: food stocks, materials, etc. held under department charge.

Liabilities consisted of debts due to the government of India, pensions and payment of provident funds.

There were, in addition, deposits of local funds in the possession of Punjab Government amounting to Rs. 1, 40, 28, 098 and civil deposits worth Rs. 5, 53, 11, 279. This amount was also to be divided proportionately between the two provinces.³⁴

The division of these assets either on the basis of book value or physical appointment was not possible unless a uniform basis for division was agreed upon between the parties concerned. There was no agreement on the issue, for the east Punjab claimed the ratio to be fixed on the basis of population and the west Punjab contended that it should be on the basis of contribution to revenue. Both the east and west Punjab put forward schemes for fixing a ratio which they would benefit.³⁵

	Population	Territory	Revenue contribution
East Punjab	44.40	37.4	36.5
West Punjab	55.60	62.6	63.5

The Punjab Partition Committee recommended that the ratio should be fixed on the basis of population and area taken together, but there was no

33. *Partition Proceedings Expert Committee Reports, op.cit.*, pp. 1-3.

34. *Partition Proceedings Expert Committee Reports, op.cit.*, pp. 1-3.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

agreement. The matter was, therefore, referred to the Arbitral Tribunal. The Tribunal awarded that the assets and liabilities of the old united province shall be adjusted for the purposes of the financial settlement in the ratio of 60 per cent for the West Punjab and 40 per cent for the East Punjab.³⁶

There were communal riots in the Punjab in the pre-partition and the post-partition times.³⁷ The communal riots first started in the Muslim-majority areas in the west Punjab in March 1947. The Hindus and the Sikhs, who had been victims of communal riots in the districts of Rawalpindi, Multan, Attock, etc., migrated to the eastern districts of the Punjab. This created tension and communal hatred wherever they settled. From March to October 1947, there had been communal rioting in the Punjab at short or long intervals. It is impossible to ascertain the actual number of casualties as there was a complete breakdown of the civil administration in both the Punjab's after the 15th August. However, a popular estimate of casualties is about half a million. Mr. Stephens and Michael Edwards gave the casualty figures to be 500,000 and 600,000 respectively.³⁸ Lord Mountbatten intimated to Francis Mudie the following figures of casualties in the various districts of the west Punjab after August 15, 1947.

Dera Ghazi Khan	250
Muzafargarh	500
Multan	25,00
Montgomery	2,000
Lyallpur	500
Sheikhupura	10,000
Jhang	15,00
Mianwali	45,00
Lahore	10,000
Gujranwala	4,000
Sialkot	35,00
Gujrat	3,000
Jhelum	3,000
Sargodha	3,500
Attock	3,000
Rawalpindi	4,500
Bahawalpur	3,000
Total	59,250

36. *East Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. IV, 1947, pp. 347-49.

37. Kirpal Singh, *The Partition of the Punjab*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1972, p. 104.

38. *Loc.cit.*

It has been estimated that nearly twenty-one lac of Muslim refugees had moved into West Punjab after 1 August 1947. During the same period twenty lac non-Muslims had left for East Punjab.³⁹ The Lahore railway station became a veritable deathtrap between August 12 and August 18. The riots in the city compelled the non-Muslim to leave, and their only avenue of escape was the railway station, because journey by roads was far more perilous. On the evening of August 11, the railway station was packed with passengers. On August 14 and 15 the railway station became a scene of wholesale carnage.⁴⁰

39. Satya. M. Rai, "Socio-Economic Conditions in the Punjab on the eve of independence and Partition", *Myth and Reality: The Struggle for Freedom in India*, (ed. A.K. Gupta), Manohur Publications, New Delhi, 1987, p. 289.

40. Satya, M. Rai, *Punjab Since Partition*, p. 122.

PATTERN OF SEXUALITY IN COLONIAL PUNJAB : 1857-1947

*Navtej Singh**

Sex is the basis for human production but the attitude and perception towards sexuality or sexual behaviour tend to change during different times and regions. A natural basic instinct was got controlled and a set of norms was evolved during the course of its evolutionary process. Hence the 'conflict' was the natural corollary of the basic instinct and the controlled behaviour. It was bound to affect the society in numerous ways: both socially and politically.

The present paper is an attempt to understand the functioning of practice of sexual behaviour and its ramifications in colonial Punjab. Due to time constraint scope of the paper is limited and is based on a single source of information.¹ The idea is to introduce a new topic of research for further exploration.

For sexual outlet marriage was the commonly accepted norm. Most marriages were arranged. Upper middle educated class was liberal in rituals of marriages and in some cases the boys and girls were asked to interact before marriage.² In the matter of transformation of man-woman relations, Punjabi women restricted to 'Maryada' and the old tradition remained alive in the face of change. Men changed rapidly in their outlook but women very slowly.³

Virginity was the basic criteria of marriage. Non-virgin girls were not accepted for marriage. If the party came to know, they would break engagement. These girls were considered a matter of shame to the in-laws.⁴ It indicates the presence of non-virgin girls despite the contrary norm. However illegitimate sex was rare among unmarried. In certain cases if they had eloped then they had the only option to run away from the house. It was dangerous. The moment they had escaped, the family members of both would follow

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1. Parkash Tandon, *Punjabi Shatabadi, 1857-1947*, Development of Punjabi Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, August 1978.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 41-42.

them on horse-back. It was usually difficult for them to hide themselves. They would capture the girl and to teach her lesson, would cut her hair. In the fit of anger father and brother in some cases could kill her. Normally virginity was kept by the girls as the marriage age was too early. Since virginity was considered as sacred, the girls were married before they could attempt to lose virginity.⁵

Illegitimate sex was more prevalent among married men and women or between married women and unmarried men. They usually eloped in the fields of *bajra* or sugarcane—the common safe place of sexual intercourse. Though such incidents were on lesser scale but no so less. But due to these many crimes were committed. The husband after knowing the act of his wife would go to search the eloped man and kill him and not the wife who gave opportunity. If the wife accepted elopement, the man could kill her also. He never bothered.⁶ Yet murders for women issues were common in society, especially the rural.⁷

Another technique for sexual gratification was the kidnapping of females along with the rapes. But acts were committed with the concealed acceptance of the women. If she was captured on the spot, she could say rape and if she escaped at her own will but changed mind later on, it was kidnapping alleged by her. In both ways man became the victim. In the third case if she fell in love with the other man, she could indulge in poisoning her husband. In the Punjab such examples were common where married women after eloping with men, poisoned their husbands. In such cases she took help of some old women to poison the husband. Many times the lover could kill the husband of the woman. These incidents were quite common among the peasant classes.⁸

Sometimes young girls also fell in love before marriage.⁹ The methodology adopted by such girls for their sexual gratification included a dark room in the neighbourhood, by making typical signs while standing on roof of her house or throwing away of message written in a piece of paper and rolled like a ball. Some daring girls used to cross over the roofs of their houses at dark. Others would opt to wear cloak (*Burka*) in order to hide their identity. Normally people knew these acts but they preferred to keep them mum. But much issues were often quoted during quarrels and disputes.¹⁰

5. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

There is an example of a girl of twenty years whose father did not marry her and it was considered late. One night her father found her sleeping with a boy from the neighbourhood. The boy belonged to the rich family. But the girl pretended that he was a thief and she did not recognise him but labelled different sorts of allegations. It was a different thing that she herself had invited him to sleep with her. On the other hand the boy accepted the allegation of theft in order to save her. During such crises girls never stood by those whom they had sex.¹¹

These matters were common. Yet virginity was considered sacred. But what was happening in the family and remained secret was not uncommon. Such sexual intercourse was common among brother and *bhabhi* (brother's wife), *chachi* (aunt) and nephew and sometimes between young mother and step-son. It was in practice because of joint family system. Second was that a particular marriage was not one's choice. Widows usually developed illegitimate sexual relationships and sex between husband and sister of wife was prevalent on a scale worth mentioning.¹²

'Mirasi' women were considered shameless and characterless to certain extent.¹³ Notorious characterless women were thrown out or socially boycotted by the *Biradari* to which they belonged.¹⁴ Prostitution was a regular feature of Punjabi Society. Prostitutes were from *Kanjar* biradari.¹⁵ Some other castes women were also in this profession. These included from Kashmir, Punjabis, women from hill areas, Rajasthani, Bloch and Pathans. Infact women came in this profession from the distant areas ranging from Karakoram to Kamaun and from Srinagar to Udaipur. Their clients included young and old, clever and innocent; infact from different stratifications of Punjab Society. Prostitutes were equally cleverer but pleasant.¹⁶

Thus the examination of the issue reveals that there was diversification in sexual pattern. Despite the accepted norms of tradition the parties had their own choices because of different justifications. However the practice was not without the emergence of conflicts at the social levels and it constituted as domestic unrest and violence. The scale of this manifestation created yet

11. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 163-64.

another image of sexuality in the popular psyche and it established the fact that in this relationship the female partner had more power to bargain. It further established hegemony of the female in both sexual and social or societal relationships at home.

Yet there are other issues need to explore including the existence of this scenario in the rural/urban divide, geographical divisions within Punjab, caste and religious social groupings, role of Western intervention including ideas and technology, emerging educated middle service and allied classes, press and the state in re-moulding and re-shaping the perceptions on sexuality during colonial settings and their wider ramifications in order to assess it as a potential social base ready to generate different socio-political landscape.

GHALIB'S ACCOUNT OF 1857 UPRISING IN DELHI

*Shyamala Bhatia**

Plunder and bloodshed are intricately woven into the history of Delhi. Over the centuries Delhi has been raped several times, its territory over run and its inhabitants put to sleep. Yet, time and again, Delhi has somehow survived and risen to attain even greater heights. Travellers and invaders, traders and fortune seekers since times immemorial, have been coming to Delhi to satiate their desires and ambitions. Attraction for the city of Delhi has survived the test of time. Delhi has always been at the centre of political and cultural developments taking place in the country irrespective of the fact whether it was the political capital or not. Ibn Battuta proclaimed Delhi "the metropolis of India, a vast and magnificent city, uniting beauty with strength- the largest city in entire Muslim (world)". What impressed Bernier was the grandeur and elaborate ceremonies at the court.¹ English who came to control a large part of India in the 19th century superseded the mighty Mughal empire that had begun to disintegrate in the early 18th century. With the establishment of English rule, the centre of political power shifted from Delhi to Calcutta. The Mughal Empire shrunk. The Emperor still reigned in Delhi, but the English ruled. The city shrunk in size, the sway of Mughal emperor restricted to the confines of the city (*Az Delhi to Palam. Badashah 'Shah Alam'*. From Delhi to Palam is the rule of Shah Alam). But for the Englishmen as well as Indians Delhi retained its importance and attraction. Officers, as well as visitors were charmed by Delhi. The city of Delhi continued to rule over the minds of Indian's as well as Englishmen. Metcalf, one of the earliest British administrators in Delhi, put into words what others had felt. "My opinion is in favour of the inhabitants both of city of Dilhee and its territory and I feel an attachment for them, which will make it painful to be separated from them, when ever the day of separation shall come".² Emily Eden was also enamoured with the city. She wrote in 1838," such stupendous remains of power and wealth passed

*101, Vaishali, Pitampura, Delhi.

1. Frykenberg (ed), *Delhi Through Ages*, A study of Delhi, p. 9.

2. Percival Spear, *Twilight of Mughals*, p. 87.

and passing away - somehow I feel we horrid English have just 'gone and done it', merchandised it, revenueed it and spoiled it all".³

But the city was not destroyed in 1838. It was still an important city in India. According to a European soldier who visited Delhi in 1844, after having visited several cities between Calcutta and Delhi remarked that Delhi was the largest city in India".⁴ Delhi was a thriving, flourishing and vibrant city in mid 19th century. The power of the Mughal emperor had vanished, he had lost his empire but the vestiges of imperial rule were still visible. The festivals and rural weddings were the occasions when the grandeur and pomp of the Mughals was on display for the common man. The king, mounted on an elephant, along with princes and noblemen, preceded and followed by horsemen and foot soldiers, went in a procession to attend the prayer meetings at Jama Masjid on Eid. Within the palace, *darbars* were still held, though not very frequently. The custom of courtiers standing with bowed heads and offering of presents to the king was still followed. The Emperor bestowed blessings and gave gifts to the visitors. The Raj had shrunk, the grandeur was gone, the treasury was depleted, the authority had vanished yet the vestiges of lost glory could be witnessed everywhere in the city. They were mute witnesses to a glorious past.⁵.., and they impressed one and all. Metcalf who had made Delhi his home and loved the city and its culture, wrote, "The ruins of grandeur that extend for miles on every side.. The palaces crumbling into dust, the vast mausoleums of Delhi, these things cannot be looked at with indifference".⁶ Culturally also Delhi was very rich at this time. While the vastness of Calcutta, buildings of Jaipur and abundance of goods in Lucknow impressed visitors, it was the urbane culture, the "aadmiyat" of Delhi that was remarked upon by a chronicler who wrote in 19th century, "Delhi was chiefly remarkable for its aadmiyat"⁷.

In the 18th century Delhi had been battered by repeated attacks by invaders like Afghans, Marathas, Ruhillas, and Jats. Faction fight at court among courtiers of different races also took a heavy toll of life and property. Natural calamities, like the great famine of 1782 also depopulated Delhi and added to miseries and sufferings of Delhites. But by early 19th century once again Delhi was on the road to recovery. When, in 1803, the British came to control the

3. Narayani Gupta, *Delhi between Two Empires*, p. 15.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

5. Percival Spear, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

6. Paven K. Varma, *Ghalib*, p. 65.

7. Narayani Gupta *op. cit.*, p. 5.

administration of Delhi, they quickly and efficiently began to restore order in the city. Imperialist exigencies demanded that the city should be peaceful and be administered efficiently so that it would soon begin to pay for itself.

With the establishment of British control, peace was restored in Delhi and once again people could live normal lives. Peace and security created a conducive environment for cultural flowering. Soon Delhi became a magnet attracting poets and writers of repute. While on one hand Delhi College became the centre of traditional and western learning, providing a congenial environment for interaction between the two, on the other side the Emperor also patronised learning and the learned. The college as well as the Mughal Durbar attracted a galaxy of illuminaries whose writings enriched the life and culture of Delhi. Mid-nineteenth century Delhi was a place of refuge, a place where literary talent was appreciated and commended. At the centre of this literary flowering was the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, who not only patronised poets like Zauk and Ghalib but also was himself a poet of no mean ability. Hali, a famous poet of the time, referring to mid 19th century, wrote in post mutiny years, that "when the glory of Muslim rule had departed, there assembled in Delhi a band of such talented men, like of which Delhi or even whole of India will never produce again. The breezes among which they flourished and flowered have veered away"⁸ Ghalib was a part of this galaxy that was illuminating the life, culture and society of Delhi. Another star of this galaxy, Mirza Farhatullah Beg wrote a fictional account of a Musshaira in Delhi, '*Dilli ki Ek Yaadgar Mushaira*' or '*Dilli ki Akhari Sham*' where he says 'Delhi shone like the last flicker of a waning candle'. Maulvi Zakkaquallah also said "when lamp of Timurid rule was about to go out it gave out so much light and was so revived that it is difficult to find a parallel".⁹

At this time honour of the Timurid dynasty was in the hands of Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. He had lost his empire, his resources were depleted, and his influence and power was limited to immediate vicinity of his fort-palace, the Red Fort in Delhi. Yet his family name carried weight. The aura of his dynastic name was such that people still regarded him as their leader, their ruler, and looked at him for inspiration. It was this magnetic power of the name and position of the Mughal Emperor that made rebellious sepoys of British Indian army hotfoot to Delhi from Meerut. On 11th may 1857 the dust raised by incoming rebel soldiers obliterated the light of rising sun on Delhi's horizon and the life of people turned upside down.

8. C.M. Naim, *Ghalib's Delhi*, p. 251.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 253.

The great Uprising had begun. The arrival of the rebellious soldiers in the wee hours of the morning caught everyone unaware, unprepared and surprised the Emperor as well as the common man in the streets of Delhi. The rebels gave no time to the people to understand the cause of their rebellious action. The motives of the rebels also remained unknown to the people. Lack of understanding caused mistrust. For Delhites it was like a curse which had descended on Delhi.

Hakim Mohammed Taki Souza wrote"

*"balla ye purabi meerut ki jo yahan laye,
amal hamare mujassm ho samne aaye,
yeh sarkashi hui meerut ki fauz mein jis dum,
na kartoos ko kate huye the jo barhum,
yahan ve aaye to aaya tha subki naak mein dum,
jo affsar unke pahle the kiya unka sir kalum".*

(This curse was brought here from Meerut by the Easteners, when the Meerut army became rebel, they who had refused to bite the bullet, when they came here then everyone was in trouble, they killed those who had been their officers).¹⁰

The first wave which heralded the arrival of the rebel soldiers, soon became a deluge and the rebels began to pour into Delhi from all sides. Though sleeping Delhi was roughly jerked into wakefulness, the nightmare had just begun. The literary world was particularly saddened by the shattering of peace.

*"Giroh ke giroh khwah sipahi ho ya zamindar sab yakdil ho gaye, aur kisi taishuda programme ke bina, door aur nazdik, har jagah ek hi kaam ke liye kamarbast ho gaye.... aisa maaloom hota tha ki jis tareh jhadu ki bahut saari sikon ko ek hi band se bandha jataa hai, usi tarha ginti shumar se bahar un ladnen walon ki kamren bhi ek hi kamarband se bandhi hui hain."*¹¹

(Hoards and hoards of men whether sepoy or peasants all became one, united in purpose, and without any fixed programme, from near and far, from every place, got ready to fight It seemed as if, like broom's sticks are all tied together, the rebels, in countless numbers, had all been tied by one cord, joined at waists with a single, common belt.)

Disruption in the calm waters of Delhi's life, that posed a threat to the known and familiar life style of Delhi frightened the writers and citizens of

10. Pradeep Saxena, (ed.) 1857, *Nirantarta aur Parivartan* (Fugane Delhi), p. 311.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

Delhi. They felt that people of Delhi were being punished without any reason. Tishna wrote:

*kissi jamane mein aisa tha ya ka thakhatnashi,
khiraj dete the sub badshahe ruhe zamin,
deyare hind tha mashoor khalk naam uska
chirag Rome se jalta tha tanna shaam uska
tmaam sheher ki pusto panaha thi Dehli
guneghar hui begunaah thi Dehli.*¹²

(Once upon a time there was a ruler who was paid obeisance by all the rulers of the world. He was famous among the people for his graciousness, and his name was known upto Rome too. Delhi was a place of refuge of people of all generations, Innocent, blameless Delhi has become a sufferer, a sinner)

Delhi had also given Ghalib a roof over his head. He had, as a young boy migrated from Agra in the second decade of the Nineteenth century and had made home in Delhi with his wife. Soon the city cast its charm on him and he came to love the city and after that he never thought of leaving Delhi. He had been living in Delhi for the last forty years at least when the rebellion began. By this time he had earned a name for himself, (once he wrote to his friend that a letter with just his name on the envelope would reach him), and was well known in the city. He was famous far and wide, was a prominent member of the aristocracy, had a wide network of friends, admirers and students and was also close to the emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. Hence he was in a position to see and experience all that was happening in Delhi in 1857. He had all the sensitivity of a writer so he could empathise with the suffering of the people. In a few words he could express the feelings of fellow beings as well put to pen all his experiences. Even in the midst of chaos, danger, deprivation, threat to life and property, he retained his sanity and continued to write. He maintained a regular correspondence with his friends. The letters written by him to his friends and *shagirds* (students) help us understand to a great extent the trauma of the times, the wanton destruction of the city, the sufferings of the people. He has given graphic details of what was happening in the city in those turbulent times.

Troubles for Delhites first took the form of killings. The rebels who arrived in Delhi began to vent their anger on any Englishman unfortunate enough to cross their path. The Killing of the people that began with the arrival of the rebel soldiers, on 11th May, continued unabated for next several

12. *Ibid.*, p. 310.

months. First it was the Christian converts, the sympathisers of the English, the supporters of the English, and the natives of England who became victims of the rebels and were killed in the streets of Delhi. Once the revolt had been crushed and the English were in control, it was the turn of the victors to play with the lives of the people of Delhi. They were unforgiving and ruthless in their vindictive action. Even on slightest suspicion of harbouring anti-English sentiments and flimsiest of evidence of having supported the cause of the Indians, men were killed by the English.

Consequently hundreds of people died in the city in this period. Ghalib wrote to his pupil and friend Munshi Hargopal Tufta:

"Angrezo ki kaum se jo in rusiyah kalon ke haath katal huye, usme koi mere umeedgah tha aur koi mera shafiq, aur koi mera dost koi mera yaar aur koi mera shagird. Hindoostanio mein kuch aziz kuch dost, kuch shagird, kuch mashhoq, so weh sub ke sab khak mein mil gaye. Ek aziz ka maatam kitna sakhat hota hai. Jo itne azizo ka maatamdaar ho, usko jist kukar ki dushwar ho. hai itne yaar mare ki jo ab mein maroonga to koi rone wala bhi na hoga."

(Those from the English race, who were killed by blacks, some were my friends, some my hopefuls, some well-wishers. Among Hindustanees some were my loved ones, some were my friends while many were my students. All are dead. To mourn the loss of one is hard, one who mourns the death of so many, how can he, not find it difficult to live. Oh! So many of my friends are dead that when I die there won't be any one to mourn for me).¹³

The people of Delhi suffered in many other ways also. If the people were being killed for supporting the Firangies and the English were being killed for becoming our rulers and ruining us, the property, specially the havelies and houses of the rich, became a target of unsocial elements in the society, and suffered extensive damage. This section of the society made most of the disorder in the city to enrich itself. Disturbances in Delhi gave the robbers and other unsavoury elements in the society an opportunity to freely roam the streets and rob the people. The houses of nobles were targeted and robbers took away all valuables.¹⁴ It was not only individual loss because along with property, the collection of books of the rich was also destroyed and thus several invaluable pieces of literature were lost to posterity. Ghalib's own writings, unpublished and of which he had no copies were thus lost to him and to the literary world.¹⁵ The world of literature also suffered in another

13. *Ghalib ke patr* (Hindi), p. 16.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

15. *Ibid.*

way. Because of the death of “thousands” and “imprisonment of hundreds” very few readers were left to appreciate the writings of the scholars. Moreover among the survivors most had lost the means to purchase literary works¹⁶. Ghalib wistfully remarked that interest in reading and writing was fast waning and people were busy in making most of the opportunity given by breakdown of law and order to make money quickly. He wrote to Shiv Narain Arora, “where are the men who would buy newspaper? The traders and Mahajans who live here now go around looking for cheaper rates of wheat. If they are very generous they would give you the correct measure of grain, why should they spend money on mere paper?”¹⁷

If the citizens of Delhi suffered at the hand of unruly elements while the Mughal Emperor was trying to overthrow the English rule and restore some order in the city, their troubles did not end with the defeat of the rebels. While the city was in the hands of the rebels, many Indians went on a looting spree and there was no one to control them. But once again, when the English came to rule over Delhi, the English as well as their Indian collaborators were given a free hand to plunder the city. The loot that fell into the hands of the Indians was sold in different parts of the city.¹⁸ But the plundered invaluable goods, like the things from the Red Fort, all found their way to England and were sold in different parts of that country. William Muir was saddened by the report that “a great number of valuable Persian and Arabic books were wantonly destroyed by our (English) troops.”¹⁹ Valuable silver vases and gold embroidered shawls were soon being sent to England.²⁰ Those Delhites who suffered losses at the time were, it was said, would be partially compensated by the English. But those people who had been robbed by the White men were left bereft to mourn their losses²¹. But soon English took charge of the city in their own hands. But for the first few weeks they left their compatriots loose in the city to do what ever they wished. These men unleashed their pent up anger against the people of Delhi and indulged in an orgy of violence. Ghalib was living in his safe locality, protected by Patiala troops, watching the “entry of angry lions”. He said, like angry animals the English “Killed the helpless”, they also burnt the houses. Desperate and fearful for their lives, “hordes and hordes of

16. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

17. Sardar Jafri, Q Hyder, *Ghalib and his Poetry*, p. 32.

18. *Ghalib ke Patr*, p. 93.

19. Narayani Gupta, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

21. *Ghalib ke Patr*, p. 132.

men and women, commoners and noblemen", poured out of the city and took "shelter in small communities and tombs outside the city walls".²² Ghalib sitting among the ruins of human life wrote to Nawab Allaudin Khan Alai of Loharu:

shahre-e-dehli ka jara jara-e- khak,
koyee waan se na aa sake yaan tak,
maine mana ki hil gaye, phir kya
gah jal kar kiya kiye shikva
gah ro kar kaha kiye baham.
Is tarhan ke visal se Ghalib
her salah-shor Inglithan ka
zohra hota hai aab insaan ka,
ghar bana hai namuna jinda ka,
tashana - e - khoon hai hur muslman ka,
aadmi vaan na jaa sake yaan ka,
wahi rona tan o dil o jaan ka
sojish - i - daghai pinah ka,
majra dida hai giriyan ka,
kya mitte dil se daag hijran ka"²³

Each soldier of England is now a potentate,
Men are mortally scared to go out in Bazaar,
The chowk is the execution ground, (The reference is to the 329 men
who were hanged here, Spear p. 219) the houses dungeons.
Each speck of Delhi's dust is thirsty for the Muslim blood.
You cannot come across the town or go from hence to the other side.
Even if you meet your woeful friends -
oft bitterly, oft a-weeping
they describe their sorry lives and bruised hearts.
Can such meetings, Gracious Lord,
Erase the scar of separation's pain?²⁴

The blood bath continued unabated for a few months. Even three months after the British victory, John Lawrence was asking his officers in Delhi, "Is private plundering still allowed? Do officers still go about shooting natives? (Percival Spear, p. 219). Delhi's sufferings that had begun from the day the

22. Narayani Gupta, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

23. *Ghalib ke patr*, p. 36-37.

24. Sardar Jaffri, Q. Hyder, *op.cit.*, p. 29.

rebels entered the city did not end with the defeat of the rebels, rather the problems, it seemed increased manifold. Ghalib lamented,

*"pahla hamla bagiyon ka lashkar,
usme pahle shaher ka aitebar luta".
"Doosra laskar khakiyon ka,
usme jaan-o-maal o massom va izaat,
va makaan va makin (wasi) asmma va jamin va asar-e-hasti dharti
sab loot gaye."*²⁵

(the first attack was by the army of rebels in which the town's trust was lost, the second attack was by the khaki clad in which life and property and innocence as also houses, residents, heaven and earth, our very existence all was plundered and destroyed).

The terror unleashed by the victors continued unchecked for several weeks. But while the Englishmen were left alone to do as they pleased, the Rulers now also began to think about the security of their dominion. The first step in this direction was to arrest and deport the Mughal emperor. This was immediately followed by shooting and killing of several members of the ruling family. After the completion of this task the English administrators took precautionary measures to prevent any recurrence of revolt. Delhi was immediately converted into a camp. One of the first measures taken to control the situation was to strictly ban free entry into the city. New laws were made in quick succession and enforced with force, bewildering the people and adding to their woes. Ghalib put in words feelings of the multitude:

*"Roz is shaher mein ek hukum naya hota hai I kuch samajh mein nahin aatta ki kya hota hai.... yahan badi shidat hai... lahori darvaje ka thanedar mudha bich kar sadk pur badehta hai jo bahar se gore ki aankh bacha kar aatta hai use pakad kar havalat mein bhej deta hai. Hakinon ke yahan se 5-5 baint lagte hain do rupiya jurmana liya jata hai; aath din kaid rakhta hai liske ilava sub thano pur hukam hai ki daryaphat karo ki kaun beticket mukim hai aur kaun ticket rakhta hai."*²⁶

(Every day there is a new law in the city. We do not understand what is happening. It is very difficult here. The thanedar of Lahori Gate sits on a stool in the middle of the road. Anyone who dares to escape the Englishman's eye and enters the city, is arrested by him and sent to prison. Prisoner is flogged five times and fined two rupees. He is kept in prison for eight days. An order

25. *Ghalib ke Patr*, p. 45.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

has also been issued to make enquiries as to who has a ticket and who is without a ticket).

Rules were being made and enforced to subdue Indians. While fear of reprisal from the rulers restricted movement of the people, the administration also ensured that the people's freedom to roam the streets of the walled city was legally curbed. Ghalib informed his friend, "*Mussalman Aadmi Shahar mein sadak pur bin ticket phir nahin sakta*"²⁷. (A muslim cannot walk the on road without a ticket.)

As a result of these measures Delhi began to face severe shortage of essential commodities. This made the life of the survivors difficult, "Every house in the city was desolate and many of them injured, the inhabitants of this huge place seven miles around are dying daily of starvation and want of shelter", Mrs Saunders reported back home²⁸. While still mourning for the dead the living had to start worrying for their own survival. While the scarcity of goods gave the traders an opportunity to hoard and raise prices, it made the life of the living hell.

The rulers at this time were acting on the premise that the Muslims had conspired against them and had incited soldiers to revolt. Hence the Muslims were looked upon with great suspicion. To prevent any recurrence of revolt the English, soon after victory in Delhi, began to make enquiries about sympathisers of the Mughals. The victorious English were so thorough in their investigations that no one was spared. Even on slightest suspicion men were imprisoned, deported or killed. Ghalib was also afraid to express his feelings and felt bereft of words due to misfortunes that had befallen on Delhi (*likhte huye darta hun, aur weh bhi kaun si khushi ki baat hai jo likhoon - I am afraid to write, and what glad tidings are there for me to write?*)²⁹ He had been fortunate enough to escape death and destruction. It was neither popularity nor merit that saved Ghalib. His safety was ensured by the presence of forces of Raja of Patiala who had been posted there to protect the hakims of the Raja. As a result of security provided by these troops Ghalib continued to live in his haveli in Ballimaran and the locality as well as his abode escaped destruction.³⁰ But he was, like many others always living under a shadow of fear. As he himself writes: "*Haqeeqate a haal isse jyada nahin ki aab tak jita hun. Bhag nahin gaya, nikala nahin gaya, loota nahin, kissi mahekme*

27. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

28. Percival Spear, *op.cit.*, 218.

29. *Ghalib ke Patir*, p. 93.

30. Sardar Jafri, Q. Hyder, *op.cit.*, 28-29.

mein abhi tak bullaya nahin gaya. Mayrj- a-baazpurasj mein nahin aaya. Aiyeenda dekhiye kya hota hai" (Simple truth is that I am still alive. Did not run away, was not sent away, was not robbed, no department has as yet summoned me let us see what has the future in store for me"³¹). Again he writes to Mir Mehdi Hussain Majrooh,

"Mein makhvi (chupa) nahin hoon. ruposh nahin hon. Hukka jante hain ki yeh yahan hai, magar na baazpuras na gir-o- daar (dhar pakar) mein aaya hoon na aapni taraf se kasad mulakaat ka kiya hai.... dekhiye anjaam a car kya hota hai"

(I am not in hiding. Rulers know I am here, but no one has enquired about me and no one has arrested me. I have not tried to meet anyone).³²

Being a well known figure in the city he was also, at this time, like many other Muslims, apprehensive that the victorious English, who were bent upon taking revenge, would find some evidence that he had been close to the Emperor. His proximity to the former Emperor was known to all hence he was also always under scrutiny, but fortunately nothing was found against him, "*mera shar mein hona hukaam ko maloom tha, magar chunki meri taraf badshahi daftar se ya mukhbiron ke byan se koyi baat paai nahin gayi, lihaja takrib nahin hui, warna jahan bade bade jagirdar bulaye gaye hue ya pakde hue aaye hain, meri kya hakikat thi I garaj ki aapne makan mein bathe hui. Darwaje ke bahar nikal nahin sakta. Savar hona ya kahin Jana to bahut badi baat hai, raha yeh ki koyi mere pass aave, shahar mein hai kaun jo aave? Ghar ke ghar bechirag pade hain; mujrim siyasat patte jatte hain, generally bandobast 11 may se aaj tuk, yani 5 december sun 1857 tuk badstoor hai... yahan bagar ticket se aane jaane nahin patta.... abhi dekha chahiye musalmano ki aabadi ka hukam hota hai ki nahin*"³³. (Rulers know that I am living in the city, but nothing has been found against me, no one spoke against me in the Emperor's office, so I have not been called to explain. Otherwise, where even big landlords have been called and arrested, what am I in comparison? I sit in my house, can not venture out of my door. To think of going out is out of question. The other question is does some one visits me? But who is left in the city to visit me? House after house lies unlit; criminals are becoming rulers, army rule that began on 11th May is still continuing till date i.e. 5th December 1857. No one can enter the city without a ticket. Let us see when would the Muslims be allowed to return to Delhi).

31. *Ghalib ke Patr*, p. 58.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Bereft of company and confined to his house Ghalib continued to correspond with his friends. But post also had become irregular and this irked a keen correspondent like Ghalib. He yearned for company and felt deprived," Look at me. I am neither free nor bound, neither afflicted nor in good health. Neither dead nor alive. Yet I go on living, keep on talking. I am neither grateful to God nor do I complain. Write to me every week."³⁴ These letters and the correspondence with friends was his life-line, "In this loneliness my correspondence has kept me alive. When I receive a letter I feel as if the writer himself has graciously arrived... the day is spent in reading and writing".³⁵ He remonstrated with his friend - student Tufta "Still no letter from you. Once I was surrounded by friends, only Shivji Ram Brahman, Balmukand Das and his son visit me often no news of friends in other cities.... how is Agra? Are people scared?"³⁶ Indians, he knew, were every where living in the shadow of fear.

Even after a year had passed, conditions for Muslims had not changed in Delhi and Ghalib was still so fearful of reprisal from English, that he requested his friend to merely address him by name and abstain from using his title, perhaps in the hope of shielding behind the anonymity of an ordinary name. "Please tell Munshi Shiv Narain not to put my mughal titles. It will be harmful. Just print Asadullah Khan Bahadur Ghalib."³⁷ It had become necessary to hide true identity because the population of Delhi had been severely depleted by now. Moreover the English were still revengeful and suspicious of Indians, specially the Muslims. It was only in January 1859 that the Muslims were allowed to enter the walled city and even then their houses were not returned to them. Moreover entry was still allowed by passes only. Ghalib explained, "The followers of Islam have been forbidden to live in the city. Their houses have been confiscated."³⁸ Most of the people had been expelled from the walled city. The Hindus were allowed to return in January 1858; but the Muslims had to remain out for much longer duration. Hence the Muslim aristocracy of Delhi suffered heavily, first at the hands of unruly elements and then at the hands of revengeful English. As a result people were impoverished to the extent that wives and children of aristocrats were forced by the circumstances to beg from door to door. Ghalib watched their plight

34. Jafri, Q. Hyder, *op.cit.*, p. 36.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

38. *Ibid.*

helplessly and felt "one must have a heart of steel to witness this scene".³⁹ "Had you been here you would have seen the Begums of Qala walking about, their faces like the full moon, clothes dirty, trouser legs torn and shoes worn out."⁴⁰

The expulsion and exodus of the Muslims from the walled city resulted in a severe shortage of workers. Hence the fine arts, which were mostly in Muslim hands suffered badly. Ghalib laments that people living in other parts of India did not seem to understand the misfortune which had befallen Delhi or the extent of destruction Delhi had suffered. In September 1858 Ghalib wrote to Tufta "you have no pity on the destruction of Delhi and seem to think that the city is still flourishing. Here one can not get hold of necha-bund (hookah maker) leave alone calligraphists and artists."⁴¹ The fine arts like calligraphy and painting also suffered a set back. The paintings and studios of several artists were lost for ever. Many of the artists had perished while some had escaped to other cities. After restoration of peace, one or two who dared to return were not in a position to carry on their work because they had no money to buy material and their studios had been destroyed.⁴² Some painters also took advantage of the scarcity of artists and began to demand exorbitant prices for their work of art. As the Indians were mostly in strained circumstances, foreigners purchased these pieces of priceless art and hence India suffered another type of loss.⁴³ Delhi lost not only these priceless articles of art but also several monuments. In order to safe guard their position and rule, the British administrators decided to clear all the area around the Red fort. As a first step extensive demolitions were carried around the Red Fort. Ghalib wistfully writes that all ground around Jama Masjid was cleared and shops and havelis demolished.⁴⁴ In the beginning troops were housed in the Jama Masjid. It was nearly five years later that the mosque was "released from military custody". But still prayers could not be offered here. Moreover the sanctity of the place also suffered because the surroundings of the mosque were taken over by eateries and hawkers and chicken, eggs and fowls were freely sold in the vicinity and even on the stairs of the Jama Masjid.⁴⁵ Though

39. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

40. Narayani Gupta *op.cit.*, p. 23.

41. Jafri, Q. Hyder, *op.cit.*, p. 33.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

44. *Ghalib ke Patr* (Hindi), p. 76.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 86 also Jafri, p. 47.

he was a not religious man yet he condemned the desecration of Jama Masjid and was deeply moved by this irreverent act of the rulers.

The soul of the city was thus injured and religious sentiments offended. But there was still more suffering in store for the people of Delhi. The administrators, paranoid about security of the Empire carried out extensive demolitions in the walled city, thereby inflicting bodily harm on the citizens of Delhi. Several structures in the area were razed to the ground. These demolitions not only destroyed the monuments but also compounded the problems of an already beleaguered populace. In order to clear the ground several wells were filled up.⁴⁶ Like the one near Hauz Qazi, Some wells dried up (*khari Bauli*) while others like the one at Laldagi, began to give salty and hot water.⁴⁷ This created acute shortage of potable water in the walled city. Water became so scarce and precious that Ghalib compared it to precious pearls⁴⁸. Ghalib feared that if these conditions continued for long then all people would be forced to migrate and the city would be depopulated and laid to ruin. Spades, he said, were "active on both sides". The shops near Ballimaran were razed to the ground to widen the way. Hundreds of houses and shops were demolished, Punjabi Katra, Dhobhi wara, Jarnail ki bibi ki Haveli, Ramji Gunj, Saadat khan katra, Sahib Ram ka bagh ki haveli, haveli of Ramjidas baghwala, all came under the hammer. Urdu Bazaar was demolished.⁴⁹ Darul-baqa (a famous college of oriental and Islamic Learning) was also demolished. Thus all the familiar and known landmarks in the city disappeared for ever. Delhi, he felt was no longer Delhi. It had been converted into a camp, a cantonment. It had lost its bazaar, its canal, its fort, in fact the whole city had been lost.⁵⁰ Along with the destruction of these physical features of the city, Delhi lost a part of its cultural heritage. Ghalib was distressed at the vanishing lifestyle to which he had grown accustomed to. Five things associated with life in Delhi which he most admired and now lost were Phool walon ki sar, daily bazaar, Jama Masjid, Qila, walk upto Jamuna bridge.⁵¹ He lamented that "Yes(once) there was a city named Delhi in the Kingdom of Hind."

Delhi not only suffered physically but its composite culture was also ruptured. Social unity of Delhi was a victim of the uprising. Now people of

46. *Ibid.*, p. 68.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

Delhi were either Hindus or artisans or Khakhi (soldiers) or Punjabi or Gore (white)⁵². Delhi citizens were also divided into two different camps, one pro-English and the other which had either supported or sympathised with the cause of the Indians. The animosity between the two sections ran deep. Many also took advantage of the conditions to take revenge for personal reasons. Ghalib was so distressed at the general conditions prevailing in his beloved city that he felt he would not be able to write any more poems or couplets. Delhi, he felt, had been cursed and damned. In deep anguish he, once even consigned Delhi to hell (*Bhad mein jaye Dili*)⁵³

Thus with the passage of time a feeling of resignation was also creeping in the hearts of the citizens, Ghalib informed his friend that conditions in Delhi were such that it was difficult to mourn any more for anything, and "any way what was left for any one to lose", and added "there is nothing left in the house for any one to plunder, the only thing left is the desire to reconstruct."⁵⁴

"Dilli ka haal to yeh hai

...ghar mein tha kya jo tera gum use garat karta,

wo jo rakhte the hum ek hasarat ae tamir so hai"

But the rulers were still not ready to allow the people to pick up the pieces and re-build their lives. The government was in deep financial straits and had to build up its own resources. The rulers had always followed a policy that the colonised region must pay for its upkeep. Now the people of Delhi were made to pay for the deeds of others. People who remained in Delhi were taxed heavily. Taxes were levied on most of the articles, "something called pon tooti (Town duty or octroi) has been levied on everything except grain and cow dung cakes,"⁵⁵ Ghalib informed his friend.

Having taken care of finances and defence of their rule, now the Imperialists wanted to display their power and might to the subject people. The aristocrats in Mughal times had contributed to glamour, pomp and show (shaman - Shaukat) to the courts and darbar time was the place to witness the regal Mughal splendour in all its glory. The English also now came to believe that their might should be displayed for all to see. They had seen and experienced the Mughal emperor holding court in all its glory. Now the English too decided to hold a Darbar. But they did not realise that absence of sufficient

52. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 97.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

number of courtiers would rob the Durbar of its shine. But Ghalib perceived this and was saddened by the fact that by the end of 1859 proposed Durbar was to be held and there were hardly any members of nobility left to pay obeisance to the rulers. Lamenting the state of nobility, Ghalib commented, "Nawab Governor-general Bahadur will arrive on December 15(1859). Let us wait and see where he stays and how the durbar is held. In the earlier durbars the seven jagirdars (of the seven states near Delhi) held their own courts. They were Jhajjar, Ballabgarh, Farrukhnagar, Dojana, Pataudi and Loharu. The first four States were wiped out during Mutiny. Dojana and Loharu are now under the administration of Hansi o-Hissar. Patuadi remains. If the commissioner of Hissar brings along the two Nawabs, it would mean three. Of the general Durbar mahajans are all there. Among the Muslim's (nobility) only three survive. Mustafa Khan in Delhi, Maulvi Saduddin in Sultanji (Nizamuddin) and in Ballimaran this dog of the world called Asad. All three condemned, doomed, despondent and grief stricken."⁵⁶ But the proposed Durbar was not held because Lieutenant -General Montgomery was also of the opinion that no Darbar could be held in Delhi since there was no one of sufficient wealth and respectability in the city.⁵⁷

It is interesting to note that some of the English also concurred along with Ghalib that the city of Delhi was cursed. In 1859, referring to same proposed visit of Canning, Lt. Gen Montgomery regretted that the governor-general would have to pass through Delhi, "A city on which there seems to be a curse."⁵⁸

But the cursed city's troubles were, it was superstitiously believed, going to increase soon. "In Shahjahanabad (Delhi) a comet was seen several evenings over western horizon after sunset. It created a sensation, hasn't been seen for the last twelve days. I only know that it means God's wrath and destruction of country. On the 1st of November, on Wednesday, the city was officially illuminated. The company handed over India to the Queen. Governor-General Lord Canning Bahadur was appointed her regent in this land Allah.... Allah.... Allah.... (November 5th, 1858)"⁵⁹ Ghalib felt that the superstition that sighting of a comet portends evil, had come true.

More bad tidings were in store for the city. With the announcement that Delhi would become a part of Punjab region, Delhi lost its status as the capital

56. Jafri and Q. Hyder, *op.cit.*, p. 40; *Ghalib ke Patr*, p. 77.

57. Narayani Gupta, *op.cit.*; p. 26.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

59. Jafri and Q. Hyder, *op.cit.*, pp. 34-35.

city of the Mughal Empire. An era ended in Delhi's history and the city which had been a centre of power and governance now became a part of British empire, to be governed from Lahore via Calcutta. All reports were to be sent to Lahore and from Lahore to Calcutta. The orders would also be received in a similar indirect manner. This again hurt the sentiments of a sensitive man like Ghalib. He felt that in other places rulers cared for the ruled but here they were bent upon destroying the city; "God's wrath had fallen on people of Delhi" *aur jagah siyasat hai ki mijmula jurririyat e siyasat hai, yahan kahar e ijhai hai ki mansh-i- tabahi hai*.⁶⁰

Ghalib survived the turbulent times but suffering of the people which he witnessed left a lasting impression on his psyche.

mere dil ka dard tere liye khani matre hai pur mera dukh itna asimit hai ki agar sittaron ko iski awaaj sunayee de jaye weh bhi khoon ke aansoo rone lagege.⁶¹

(The pain in my heart is merely a story for you but my sorrow is so deep that if my wailings reach the stars, then they too will shed tears of blood). The patriot in him sounded despondent at the failed attempt and he wrote,

*"Phage the hum baht,
so usi ki saza hai ye,
Hokar asir dabte hain rahjan ke pav,
pinha the dam-e-sakhi kareeb ashian ke,
udne na paye the ki giraftaar huye hum*,⁶²

(We had run a lot and are being punished for that. We are caught and are now (in the prison) massaging the feet of the robbers. We had hardly started to fly when we were caught almost near the nest, (destination), such a strong one was the hidden trap. The chains of bondage irked him and he felt grieved at the loss of freedom. He had seen and also experienced the result of revolting against the English. But a writer can not be silenced and Ghalib wrote in Dastanbo:

"mere man ke taron mein ek aisi leher hai jisse chingarian niklati hain our mein is aag ugalti leher se darta hoon ki kahin yeh khud sangeetkar ko hi na jala de. Meri juban par aqaidi dastaan hai aur yahi dastaan mujh par khanjar taane khari hai".⁶³

There is such a wave emanating from my heart from which embers fly,

60. *Ghalib Ke Patr* (Hindi), p. 44.

61. Pradeep Saxena, (ed.) 1857, *Nirantarta aur Parivartan*, Fugane, Delhi, *op.cit*, p. 33.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

and I am afraid of this fire- belching wave that it may not burn the musician himself. There is my personal experience on my lips and it is holding a dagger over my head.

Life had dealt Ghalib a heavy blow. His heart was full of deep sorrow for the human suffering he had witnessed over the years. But the wings of his creativity were not cut. Great poet that he was, he could express the experiences of life in a nutshell. He wrote with a prayer in his heart

I have been helpless witness of man killing in civil strife and mutiny
I have watched an empire falling to decay and dying
I have watched an emperor taken captive and exiled to an alien land,
I have felt old foundations shifting on sand and crashing
So I have lived and passed my days.
How can I bring myself to say God exists,
God the Bounteous Giver, God the Beneficent".⁶⁴

In en he just prayed for succour not for himself but for fellow citizens "*tmamm aalam mein na ho sake, jis sahar mein rahe wahan koyee bhukha nanga nazar na aaye.*" (If not everywhere at least in the city I live there should be no man who goes hungry or has no clothes to clad himself).⁶⁵

*And he also did not lose hope for liberation of India, He also continued to have a deep faith in the justice of the Almighty, "we have fallen from grace, but yesterday when an angel was rude to us you condemned him."*⁶⁶

64.. Sardar Jafri, *op.cit.*, p. viii.

65. Ghalib to Mualana Hali, cited by Sultan Ahmed in *Ghalib Aur 1857, Nirantarta aur Parivartan*, ed. Pradeep Saxena, p. 56.

66. *Ghalib ke Patre*, p. 83.

SIKANDER-JINNAH PACT AND ITS AFTERMATH

*Amir Jahan**

Under the Government of India Act, 1935, elections to the Punjab Legislative Assembly were held in the early part of 1937. In these elections, the Unionist party won 96 out of 175 seats, thus winning a clear majority in the Assembly, but Sikander Hayat Khan formed a coalition Cabinet with three Muslims, two Hindus and one Sikh.¹ He left the choice of non-Muslim representatives to the non-Muslim members and did not like to impose persons of his or his party's choice.

At the elections, the Unionist party had opposed the Muslim League, but when after assumption of office, the Congress refused to include true Muslim representatives into cabinets which brought great bitterness amongst Muslims, all over the country.

The Muslim League got badly mauled when it met an ignominious defeat in the 1937 elections in the Punjab and other Muslim majority province. In U.P. also the Congress refused to form a coalition ministry with the Muslim League. Consequently Jinnah's position in the all India politics suffered a rude set back.²

Regarding the attitude of the Congress, Jinnah said in his presidential address that, the present leadership of the Congress, especially during the last ten years, has been responsible for alienating the Muslims of India more and more, by pursuing a policy which is exclusively in favour of Hindus, and since they have formed governments in six provinces where they are in majority, they have by their words, deeds and programmes shown, more and more, that the Musalmans cannot expect any justice or fair play at their hands. M.A. Jinnah knew that the position of the Punjab provincial Muslim

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1. It included Chaudhri Chhotu Ram as Finance Minister, Mian Abdul Haye as Minister of Education, Sir Sunder Singh Majithia as Revenue Minister and Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana as Minister for Public Works in his Cabinet. He also included Raja Narendra Nath and Sir Monohar Lal from the National Progressive Party in his Ministry. *The Tribune*, April 23, 1937.
2. Satya M. Rai, *Legislative Politics and the Freedom Struggle in the Punjab*, New Delhi, 1984, p.239.

League was even worse than that of its parent body since with 56.2 per cent Muslims in the province, it has retained only one seat out of 84 Muslim seats in the provincial elections of 1936-37. Thus, Jinnah had already invited Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, the Premier of Punjab, to take part in the session of the All India Muslim League at Lucknow in October, 1937.³

Jinnah's status as the accredited Muslim leader and to enable him to represent the whole Muslim community and settle terms with other parties in All-India matters, Sir Sikander Hayat Khan prompted to conclude the Sikander-Jinnah pact.⁴

The pact was announced to the Council of the All India Muslim League and references had been made to it repeatedly in responsible League quarters since 1937, without any repudiation from Jinnah or the League itself. The pact provided that on his return to the Punjab:-

- (a) That Sir Sikander Hayat Khan would convene a special meeting of his party and advise all Muslim members of the party, who were not members of the Muslim League already to sign its creed and join it. The ministry continued to function according to the terms of the Sikander-Jinnah Pact.⁵
- (b) That in future elections and by-elections for the legislature after the adoption of this arrangement, the groups consisting the present Unionist Party will jointly support candidates put up by their respective groups.
- (c) That the Muslim League members of the legislative assembly, who are elected or accepted on the League ticket, will constitute the Muslim League party in the legislature. It shall be open to the Muslim League party so formed to maintain or enter into a coalition or alliance with any other party.⁶

The lead given by Sir Sikander Hayat Khan was followed by Fazl-ul-Haq, the Premier of Bengal and the leader of the Praja Krishak Party, on the next day.⁷

3. Amarjeet Singh (ed.), *Jinnah and Punjab: Shamsul Hasan Collection and other Documents 1944-1947*, New Delhi, 2007, p.20.

4. O.P. Ralhan and S.K. Sharma (eds.), *Documents on Punjab*, Vol. 3, New Delhi, 1994, p. 273.

5. *Ibid.*, pp.273-274.

6. K.C. Yadav, *Punjab Colonial Challenge and Popular Response 1849-1947*, New Delhi, p.167.

7. *The Tribune*, October 17, 1937.

Why Sikander Hayat Khan joined up with Jinnah at the Lucknow session of the League is a controversial subject. There is one view that the growing strength of the Congress a threat to his own political interests compelled Sir Sikander to join the League. Another view is that Jinnah, was posing a danger to the stability of the Unionist Ministry by recognizing the Muslim League in the Punjab.

But the fact is that neither the Congress nor the Muslim League in the Punjab was in a position to harm the Unionist Ministry in any way as it was enjoying the largest majority in the house at that time. So the real reason behind signing the pact was that Sikander was under the pressure of the British Government. He had gone to the Lucknow session to sign this famous pact at the behest of his imperialist masters; for the revival of dead Jinnah and his League was the most essential task for His Majesty's government because only revived Jinnah and the League could stand in the way of the Congress which had started posing a grave peril to the very existence of the British in India. Therefore, the British Government through Sir Henry Craik, the Home Member of Viceroy's executive council, persuaded Sikander to strengthen Jinnah's hands so as to contain the Congress demand of complete independence at the national level.⁸

About the political value of this agreement, Choudhary Khaliquzzaman says... what would have happened if the Punjab Premier had not come to the rescue of the Muslim League organization...

Briefly it would have remained merely the Muslim League of the Muslim minority provinces and in times to come would have had to surrender to the Congress Sikander... saved Muslim India by throwing full weight at this critical hour behind the Muslim cause. It was a historic event for Muslim India and the enthusiasm of Muslims in the success of the League was quite in accord with tremendous gain for them.⁹

Sikander Hayat Khan's joining hands with the Muslim League particularly at a time when he had majority of 99 members in a House of 175 proved to be a blunder. By this action Sikander sounded the death knell of the Unionist party of which he was the leader as he made the Muslim members of his party, subject to the discipline of the Muslim League whose aim or object were identical with those of that party. The Unionist party was devoted to inter-communal harmony while the Muslim League's objectives were safe-

8. K.C. Yadav, "The Partition of India: A Study of the Muslim Politics in Punjab, 1848-1947", *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. 1, Patiala, 1983, pp.130-131.

9. Chaudhari Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, Karachi, 1961, p.171.

guarding the Muslim political rights and welfare of Indian Muslims. With the intention of acquiring Muslim ascendancy and Muslim domination, Fazl-i-Hussain, founder of the Unionist party, firmly believed that any communal approach to the political tangle of the Punjab was based in an economic programme and mutual cooperation among all communities. It was on this account that Fazl-i-Hussain refused to accept the suggestion of Jinnah to join the Muslim League in 1936. Sir Sikander's joining Muslim League greatly enhanced the power and prestige of the party.¹⁰ Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, at that time was not only the tallest leader of the Muslims of India, thus, by signing a pact with him Jinnah, came to be a symbol of Muslim destiny and began to be greeted in the country as the sole spokesman of the Muslims.

The pact attracted widely divergent comments from the leaders of various political parties, and the press. The Daily Herald (Lahore 18.10.1937) an organ of the Hindu Mahasabha made a self-contradictory suggestion, meant only for the enlightened electorate. It wrote that the pact had consolidated the Muslims of the Punjab and Bengal and Sind would follow soon. Congress should also consolidate the Hindus through the Hindu *sangathan*. Only then Hindu-Muslim unity would be possible. Similar communal proposals were also made by Bhai Parmanand and Raja Narindera Nath whose Hindu Sabha group continued to support Sikander's government in Punjab Legislature even after the conclusion of this pact.¹¹

However, the Muslim League leaders like Barkat Ali looked upon the pact from the view point of the Muslim League. They commented that by virtue of this pact, the Central Muslim League acquired the right to interfere in the affairs of the Unionist Government.

The Khalsa National Party passed a resolution asking the Premier to clarify his position regarding the agreement.¹² In other words, it meant that if Sikander Hayat Khan had entirely yielded to the command programme of the League then, in that case, they might withdraw from the government. But if it felt satisfaction over the Premier's declaration that his 'adherence' to the Muslim League could not alter and effect the position and policy in the Unionist party in the Punjab.¹³

10. Kirpal Singh, "Genesis of Partition of the Punjab 1947", *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. VII, Patiala, p. 404.

11. *The Tribune*, October 24, 1937.

12. Emerson to Linlithgow, letter dated 12 November 1937, Linlithgow Papers, NMML, quoted in Satwant Singh, *Punjab Politics (1937-47)*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Punjabi University, Patiala.

13. *Ibid.*, Letter dated 3 December 1937.

On the other hand, Iqbal criticized the Sikander-Jinnah Pact of 1937. He feared that Sikander Hayat Khan's machinations would lead to the ruinations of Muslim League in Punjab.¹⁴

Expressing moderates' or liberals' disappointment, Professor Gulshan Rai wrote that they had been supporting on selective basis the economic programmes of the Unionist Government in the hope that it would remain non-communal but now that it had joined hands with the Muslim League, liberals should join the Congress and strengthen the national forces fighting for the freedom of the country.¹⁵

However, Sikander-Jinnah Pact was not a one sided affair, Jinnah utilized the pact to strengthen the Muslim League and Muslim nationalism at the national level whereas Sikander Hayat Khan used the pact to assume complete control of the Punjab Muslim League. Moreover, the far reaching consequences of the pact proved, beneficial to the Muslim League in Punjab although to begin with, Jinnah conceded to the Unionists all rights in Punjab politics and even behaved indifferently with Mohammad Iqbal and other leaders of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League.

The Sikander-Jinnah Pact provided an opportunity to the Muslim League to obtain the support of the *Raj* during 1938-39 which encouraged the Muslim League to pass the historic 'Lahore Resolution' at Lahore in March 1940, at the twenty-seventh session of the All India Muslim League and demanded the establishment of an independent and sovereign Muslim State-Pakistan was not explicitly mentioned, nor was it clear from the language of the resolution whether a single Muslim State of both North-Western and Eastern zones of India had been envisioned or the separate autonomous independent States, one in the north-west and other in the eastern zone. However, it became clear from the assertion of Jinnah that Muslim League envisaged a single sovereign Pakistan State.¹⁶

The Pakistan Resolution stirred the politics of Punjab partly because it gave Jinnah a foothold in the province and partly because of the uncertain future it held out for the Sikhs and Hindus. Sikander Hayat Khan, despite the fact that he did not like this resolution but was not in a position to oppose it; and he and his Unionist party became a party to this resolution in Punjab province, which though central to its future scheme of things, was still not a happy hunting ground for it due to strong Unionist presence with

14. *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 14, 2002.

15. *The Tribune*, October 12, 1937.

16. Amarjeet Singh, *op. cit.*, p.21.

the Pakistan Resolution the Muslim League gained both at the national as well as the provincial level. By making the Unionist a party to this resolution the League undermined their secular credentials. This marked the beginning of the end of the broad-based, inter-community social coalition that the Unionists represented in the Punjab.

After the death of the Sikander Hayat Khan in 1942, the Muslim League adopted a very firm attitude towards the Unionist party. Jinnah asserted that the Ministry in Punjab should be named, the Muslim League coalition ministry as well as the Muslim members who constituted the majority in the Unionist party were members of the Muslim League. Khizar Hayat Khan, who succeeded Sikander Hayat Khan did not agree as he wanted the regime of the Unionist party to continue as had been agreed to under the terms of the Sikander-Jinnah Pact. Since Jinnah was very keen to have Muslim League Ministry in the Punjab, he personally went to Lahore on March 20, 1944 and asked Khizar Hayat Khan to persuade his non-Muslim colleague to join the Muslim League coalition.¹⁷

However, Khizar Hayat Khan had expressed his inability to accede the demands of Jinnah of naming the Unionist ministry as a League coalition ministry, on the ground of unequivocal opposition to any such change of his non-Muslim colleagues in the cabinet Khizar Hayat Khan even refused to give any written reply to M.A. Jinnah.¹⁸

Mohammad Ali Jinnah addressing the annual session of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, held at Sialkot in the last week of April 1944, said that, "Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana has deceived the Muslim League and entire Muslim nation, but when God wants to destroy people, he makes them blind first. Only one course is open to us, the more we are united, and the more we are efficient there would be less efforts by our opponents to destroy us". The more we are divided there would be more efforts to destroy us. However, I appeal to the Ahrars, Jamiat Ulemas Shias, Sunnis Jats, Rajputs, Afghan and other Muslim of Punjab unite themselves for the cause of the Muslims League and the achievement of Pakistan.¹⁹

Khizar did not accept any of the conditions put forward by Jinnah. Not only that, he insulted the Quaid by not coming to respond his calls and not replying to his letters, let alone obeying his commands. This infuriated Jinnah still further and on 27 April 1944, he got Khizar expelled from the

17. Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman, *op. cit.*, p.322.

18. *The Dawn*, March 20, 1944.

19. Amarjeet Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

League in a huff.²⁰ That historical event marked the end of Sikander-Jinnah Pact also.

It was reported in Eastern Times from Lahore, that Khizar's position is daily becoming more and more untenable. It was pointed out that if the breach of the so called Sikander-Jinnah Pact absolves him of his obligation to bring his case before the council, how does it allow him to raise the Pakistan cry? Khizar's insistence in sticking to Pakistan is the surest indication of tremendous hold of the Pakistan idea on the Muslim mind which of course implies the undisputable strength of the League and the realization of its own weak position.²¹

The elections of 1946 proved a turning point in the history of the Punjab. The Muslim League secured 73 seats of the Punjab Legislative Assembly out of 85 seats contested, whereas the Unionist Party won only 19 seats out of 99. Muslim League polled 75.26% votes, whereas the Unionist party polled 26.61% votes.²² The Muslim League emerged the largest single party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. Despite the Muslim victory in the elections Khizar Hayat Khan formed a coalition ministry with the support of the Akali Party and the Congress Party. It was right to some extent in foreseeing that the Muslim League with all its zest for Pakistan was not likely to come to terms with the non-Muslim political parties. He, therefore, formed a ministry as a matter of political expediency. But this had a very adverse effect on the Muslims of the Punjab who had been playing a leading role in the Punjab politics as their numbers entitled them to. Now for the first time their largest party found itself totally excluded by an undreamt of combination of Congress, Unionist and Akali Party. If Khizar had not formed the ministry and the League leaders had been left with some hope of office, they would have been compelled just in order to gain power, to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards the minorities. In that case they would have been less tempted to stir up strife.

The election results in 1946 had clearly indicated that the Muslims of the Punjab were solidly behind the Muslim League and were aspiring to establish Pakistan with the Punjab as one of its provinces.

20. K.C. Yadav, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

21. Amarjeet Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

22. Kirpal Singh, *The Partition of Punjab*, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1972, p. 372.

It is obvious from the above discussions that Sikander-Jinnah Pact further weakened the position of the Punjab Muslim League, then, why did Jinnah sign this agreement. He, it seems, at that political juncture was badly in need of the support of the Unionists in all India politics. In order to gain this, he was prepared, for the moment, to see the Punjab Muslim League come under Unionist control. The immediate effect of the pact was to strengthen the position of the Muslim League in all India politics. Sikander saved the Muslims of India by coming to the League session in Lucknow and by infusing life into the organization. His association with the Muslim League at this crucial hour for the sake of Muslims of India is an event in history and it must live forever to remind us of his greatness.

VERNACULAR PRESS AND WOMEN IN COLONIAL PUNJAB : A CASE STUDY OF 'ISTRI SATSANG'

*Parneet Hayer**

The print media, especially vernacular magazines and newspapers in the various provinces of British India, played a major role in the self-defining project for Indian men and women.¹ It was instrumental in bringing about radical changes and reforming the society as well as educating people about their rights and duties. Thus, it tried to bring about socio-religious as well as political awakening among people in the country. Even the statements and objective reports published in the newspapers are valuable sources to understand and reproduce events. Thus, one can understand how the press and particularly the vernacular press, was by far the single most important source responsible for creating awareness among the different sections of the society in colonial period.

The advent of Britishers in India led various changes in the society. These foreign rulers introduced new ideas about women's roles and capabilities and these ideas were adopted by the enlightened Indians.² The nineteenth century social reformers treated women as objects for reform or upliftment. There was emergence of women as rudimentary intelligentsia in the early twentieth century and there was a qualitative change in the approach on the ongoing search for a new woman.³ Now the social reformers used media for projecting the persistent social blindness to the contentious issue of gender relations and nature of women's oppression and they sought to carve out not only new spaces and roles for women but also to fashion a new image and mental personality.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to trace out the role of

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1. Kamlesh Mohan, *Towards Gender History: Images, Identities and Roles of North Indian women with special reference to Punjab*. Hence forth *Towards Gender History*, Aakar Books, Delhi, 2007, p. 105.
2. Geraldine Forbes *The new Cambridge History of India: Women in modern India*. Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 1996, p. 1.
3. Kamlesh Mohan, *op.cit.*, p. 105.

vernacular press which helped in the gender consciousness and activism among the women in colonial Punjab and made them aware about discrimination, social tyranny, oppression, economic dependence and low status owing to their biological identity. In this work, a special critical analysis of the newspaper '*Istri Satsang*' is made. Various newspapers, magazines, journals, weeklies or fortnightly were published in Punjab like '*Istri*' (Amritsar), '*Azad Bhain*' (Rawalpindi), '*Sughar Saheli*' (Amritsar), '*Istri Rattan*' (Layalpur), '*Istri Sudhar*' (Amritsar), '*Huq Bulletein*' (Lahore), '*Huq*' (Lahore), '*The Punjab*' (Amritsar), '*Punjabi Bhain*' (Ferozpur) and many more. All of them in one or the other way played a pivotal role in recasting and redefining the image of women in Punjab. Mostly of these newspapers and journals were edited by the male members but sometimes they had opted their wives as editors like of '*Punjabi Bhain*', '*Sharif Biwi*' (Lahore) etc. Few of them also represented Arya Samajist ideology like '*Istri Satsang*' (Allahabad). Some were also the representatives of different organisations like '*Punjab Bhain*' (Ferozepur), which was started by Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala, Ferozepur.

'*Istri Satsang*' was published as fortnightly from Amritsar (Punjab) in Punjabi. The newspaper gave importance to highlight political, social and cultural events. It was replete with various articles and multifarious news items. Its structuring of essay and articles was quite attractive. Every newspaper has its own political agenda as well as a concern to protect the interests of its nation and community. This newspaper had its political agenda as to liberate women from the orthodox and obnoxious evils of society. To bring the fruits of civilization such as female education, liberal thought, equality, fraternity, and the concept of 'new woman – equal to man in every way of life' was the lofty aim of the '*Istri Satsang*'. Thus it was launched with a view to presenting not only women's perception of existing social mores, problems and current national issues but also the common man's opinions and aspirations.

It undertook to sculpt a new model for Indian woman: self reliant, confident and capable of securing her rights and her independent economic and social status.⁴ It was divided into two sections: (i) for adults, especially women and (ii) for teenaged school and college going students. In its section for adults, the journal used to publish articles on various socio-political issues, prayers, patriotic poems, serialized novels penned by a number of socially

4. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

aware women. Male writers, too made useful contribution like 'Niha!' Singh Chawal Mandi, Rawalpindi,⁵ Jan Kama,⁶ Bhagat Singh.⁷ Matrimonials for widowers and widows were also published. The second section addressed its message to the impressionable teen-aged girls to train them not merely as prospective housewives and mothers, but more as propagandists and active participants in national movement for freedom struggle.

The major issues such as education, purdah system, mismatched marriages, widows marriages, Religious education sparked off debates and discussions among the readers and contributors.

Education figured prominently on the agenda of the crusaders for women's upliftment. In order to demolish the deep-rooted social prejudice, oppressive customs and male resistance against women's education, '*Istri Satsang*' launched a fierce campaign for creating awareness among men and women through its columns under the heading of 'ਅਵਿਦਿਆ ਦੇ ਦੁਖੜੇ' (ill effects of illiteracy), 'ਕੰਨਿਆ ਲਈ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ' (education for girl), 'ਵਿਦਿਆ' (education), 'ਇਸਤਰੀ ਸਿਖਿਆ' (female education). Article related to the social agony of illiterate women who suffered daily insults and humiliations as wives at the hands of their educated husbands owing to their genuine problems of communication coupled with their ignorance were regularly published. The ignorance even leads to superstition. The following extract from Nihal Singh, Chawal Mandi, Amritsar's article 'ਇਕ ਅਨਪੜ੍ਹ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਦੁਖੜੇ' (problems of an illiterate woman) which appeared in the February, 1909 issue, illustrates the point.

ਅਵਿਦਿਆ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਮੜੀਆਂ ਮਸ਼ਾਨਾਂ, ਧਾਗੇ ਤਵੀਤਾਂ, ਜਾਦੂ, ਟੂਨੇ ਆਦਿ ਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਫਸ ਗਈਆਂ। ਹਾਇ ਅਵਿਦਿਆ! ਤੂੰ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਨੇਰੀ ਕੋਠੜੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਫਸਾ ਕੇ ਭੱਬਲਭੂਸੇ ਖਵਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਤੇਰੇ ਕਾਰਨ ੧੦ ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਲੜਕੀ ਨੂੰ ੬੦ ਸਾਲ ਦਾ ਖਾਵੰਦ ਪਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।⁸

(Because of illiteracy, women are becoming more and more superstitious. Even 10 year old girl is married to 60 year old man).

Sikh Kanya High school, Rawalpindi's students poem 'ਪੰਥ ਅੱਗੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ' made an urge for education and explained this cause because India had an tradition of women's education and also gave evidence of Sikh Guru's who propagated for women education. This is illustrated in the following extract from the poem:

5. *Istri Satsang*, Amritsar, 20 Aug. 1909, p. 4.

6. *Ibid.*, 25 March, 1909, p. 6.

7. *Ibid.*, 10 Jan., 1909, p. 6.

8. *Ibid.*, 15 February, 1909, p. 5.

‘ਤੇ ਸਤਗੁਰ ਨੇ ਕੀ ਫੁਰਮਾਯਾ?
ਅਨਾਥਾ ਪਰ ਦਇਆ ਕਰਨੀ।
ਤੇ ਵਿੱਦਿਆ ਦਾ ਉਜਾਲਾ ਦਰ।
ਰਾਵਲਪਿੰਡੀ ਦੀ ਕੰਨਯਾ ਸਭ
ਪੁਕਾਰਨ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਵੀਰ’ : ਵਿਦਯਾ ਦਾ ਪਸਾਰ ਕਰ।॥⁹

The second important theme of ‘*Istri Satsang*’ was vigorous campaign against *purdah* - ‘*Purdah*’ which literally means a woman’s covering her face as screen from the eyes of the strangers. Almost all the socio-religious reform movements worked against *Purdah*. Arya Samaj, Dev Samaj, Singh Sabha & Brahmo Samaj worked to create public opinion against this evil practice. ‘*Punjabi Bhain*’, ‘*Azad Bhain*’, ‘*Istri Sudhar*’ along with ‘*Istri Satsang*’ were the organs of these movements against ‘*Purdah*’.¹⁰ Articles ‘ਸਾਡੇ ਦੇਸ ਦੇ ਗੈਰਣੇ’ (ornaments of the country) and ‘ਪੁੱਢ’ (*purdah*) represented the views of the contributors against *purdah* and use of jewellery which they regarded as against the Sikh tradition of Gurus.¹¹

The debate on mismatched marriages, which figured in the columns of the newspaper, highlighted the growing resentment of the critical women against the discriminatory social norms of the patriarchal family system in India. Especially, the increasingly popular practice of widower’s remarriage greatly agitated their minds because it was responsible for adding to the number of child-widows. The sufferings of widows is quite judiciously presented in the articles of *Istri Satsang*. ‘ਰੰਡੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਦੁਖੜੇ’ (problems of widows) article in the July 1911 issue elaborated the causes and effects of widowhood. It presented the legacy of Sikh Gurus who always propagated against the poor condition of widows. ‘ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰ ਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ‘ਵਿਧਵਾ ਵਿਆਹ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਰੀਤੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਦਾ ਬੀਜਾ ਉਠਾਇਆ ਸੀ।’¹² How a widow was prepared to become *sati* is also explained in the article of June 1910 issue. She was given ‘*kesar*’ before she was forced to immolate herself on the pyre of her husband.¹³ For improving the condition of widows, various matrimonial advertisements were published in the newspapers under the heading of ‘ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਂ ਲਈ ਵਿਧਵਾ ਇਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ’ eg. “ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲਸਾ (ਜਾਤ ਜਿਮੀਦਾਰ) ਔਰਦਾ ਪੋਸਟ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਨਖਾਹ ੬੦ ਰੁਪਏ ਮਹੀਨਾ) ਵਿਧਵਾ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕੋਈ ਜਾਤ ਹੋਵੇ ਕੋਈ ਉਮਰ ਹੋਵੇ।” and “(ਇਕ ਸਿਖ) ਅਰੋੜਾ ਖਾਨਦਾਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਉਮਰ ੩੫

9. *Ibid.*, 15 March, 1910, p. 5.

10. Kiran Divendra, ‘*Status and position of women in India*’, Shakti Books, U.P., 1985, p. 14.

11. *Istri Satsang*, Amritsar, 5 May 1905, p. 10.

12. *Ibid.*, 25 March, 1911, p. 8.

13. *Ibid.*, 5 May, 1913, p. 6.

ਸਾਲ ਦੁਕਾਨਦਾਰ ਆਮਦਨ ੧੨੫) ਰੁਪਏ ਮਾਹਵਾਰ ਲਈ ਇਕ ਵਿਧਵਾ ਇਸਤਰੀ ੧੮, ੨੦ ਸਾਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ।”¹⁴ Even the Vidva Vivah Sahaik Sabha of Lahore did a commendable work under Sir Ganga Ram in arranging widow remarriages in all over Punjab.¹⁵

Reviews of different books of that time were also done by this newspaper. ‘Istri Dharam Vichar’ book of fifty pages was critically examined by ‘Istri Satsang’ and was regarded as good source of imparting religious studies in women.¹⁶

Contemporary news of importance from social, economic, political fields were regularly published in the newspaper. This newspaper succeeded in its mission of transforming the consciousness, i.e. self image, world views, ideals, aspirations and goals of the urban Indian women especially of colonial Punjab. It threw light on each and every topic of the society including female education, widow remarriage, sati system, purdah system, illiteracy, which not only led the local impact but also made an imprint on national level as it had writers like Mahatma Gandhi. ‘*Istri Satsang*’ wielded a tremendous influence over the Punjabi society as it fought against social evils and worked relentlessly for creating awareness among the women in colonial Punjab.

14. *Ibid.*, 15 February, 1915, p. 11.

15. Kiran Divendra, *op.cit.*, p. 14.

16. *Istri Satsang*, Amritsar, 25 July 1909, p. 6.

GREEN REVOLUTION IN PUNJAB

*Jashandeep Singh Sandhu**

The green revolution refers to the development and implementation of synthetically engineered types of food grains developed by Norman Borlaug. Although research and implementation of green revolution techniques in agriculture originated in the U.S. prior to World War-II, Mexico became the proving ground for the new technology, and by the early 1960s, the third world, particularly India, sought replication of the successes in green revolution agricultural techniques found in Mexico.

The phenomenon of Green Revolution which was witnessed in the 1960's in India catapulted India from a chronically food deficient country, with a begging bowl image, to one which was self sufficient and which became over time even surplus in food.

The positive expectations of the green revolution technology appear mostly on a broader, generalized scale of considerations. The ability of the developing world to increase plant productivity would help feed millions and ease the burden of rapidly increasing populations. Simultaneously, rural peasants would experience economic prosperity as a result of higher crop yields. The prospects of feeding millions worldwide encouraged scientists and many third world governments. In this light, the Indian government launched the New Agricultural Strategy in the mid 1960s. Previous indigenous cropping patterns were replaced with the new "miracle seeds" of the green revolution.

This change from food deficient to food surplus country was brought about by major technological reforms that occurred in Indian agriculture. Nehru as Prime Minister of India was fully aware of the centrality of agricultural development in achieving his goal of rapid industrialization. Keeping this objective in mind the plan outlays on agriculture since the first plan itself were substantial. In the first five year plan (1952-57), the total outlay on agriculture and irrigation was 31 percent of the total. In all the subsequent plans the outlay for agriculture was between 20 to 24 percent. Nehru from the very beginning placed great emphasis on creating the physical

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and scientific infrastructure necessary for modern agriculture. According to Nehruvian vision massive irrigation and power projects like the Bhakra-Nangal etc. numerous agricultural universities, research laboratories, fertilizer plants etc. should be set up in India. In this regard a scholar of Green Revolution, G.S. Bhalla points out,

'The qualitative technological transformation in India - The Green Revolution ... came about not during his (Nehru's) life time but soon after his death. But the foundations for the technological development were laid during Nehru's time'.¹

There was creditable growth of agricultural output between 1949 and 1965 of about 3 percent per annum, even then India was facing food shortages. Since the mid fifties and in the mid sixties India was in a crisis situation.

There was a massive jump in population growth rates after independence, to about 2.2 percent per annum from about 1 percent in the first half of 20th century; the slow but steady rise in per capita income put long term pressures on Indian Agriculture, creating a demand for food which Indian markets were not able to meet. In the mid fifties, food prices experienced an upward push. To meet the food shortage and to stabilize the prices India was forced to import increasing amounts of food.

The controversial agreements made by India to import food from the US under the PL-480 scheme started in the year 1956. Under that scheme nearly 3 million tonnes of food grains were imported in the very first year and the volume of imports kept rising reaching about 4.5 million tonnes in the year 1963.

When the import of food grains was going on, the political scenario changed with Indo-China war in 1962 and Indo-Pak war in 1965. To further complicate the situation there were two successive droughts in the year 1965 and 1966, leading to fall in agricultural output by 17 percent. India was forced to import more than 10 million tonnes of food grains in 1966. Such a situation was defined as India's desperate dependence on the US for food.

In this complex scenario of the mid-sixties, economic self-reliance and particularly self-sufficiency in food grains became the top priority objective of India's economic policy and also for that matter India's foreign policy. The new Agricultural Strategy was drawn up. The then Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Food Minister, C. Subramaniam and Indira Gandhi, who

1. G.S. Bhalla, 'Nehru and Planning - Choices in Agriculture', working paper series, School of Social Sciences, JNU, New Delhi, 1990.

followed Shastri in 1966, all gave full support for developing Indian agriculture on new lines.

The state of Punjab took the lead in the turn around, which was witnessed in Indian agriculture. This phenomenon was termed as Green Revolution. The comparative success of the green revolution in Punjab is due to a number of favourable conditions prevailing in Punjab.

In 1972, Byres points out that 'Punjab is an unusual state in several respects. It has always been a high growth area; it has the smallest proportion of farm workers who are landless of all the Indian states; its farms are on average twice as large as the all-India size; consolidation has proceeded far more than elsewhere; irrigation is more widespread, and so on'.²

By accepting new improved varieties of crops, and shifting to higher and efficient production functions, the farmers of Punjab have brought about the Green Revolution.

In the sixties, C. Subramaniam, the Agriculture Minister of India arranged to import of 1800 tonnes of wheat from Mexico.³ This new seed of wheat imported from Mexico and later new rice varieties from Taiwan served as starting point in the initiation of the process of modern farming.

The epicentre of the Green Revolution in Punjab was Punjab Agricultural University at Ludhiana, which was setup in 1962. It was here that the visiting Norwegian-American agro-scientist, Norman Borlaug and his team of Indian scientists evolved new strains of Mexican dwarf wheat and passed the seed on to the farming community.⁴

The adoption of the Mexican varieties of wheat and dwarf paddy have shown spectacular results than others. The new varieties had two very distinct characteristics namely, dwarfness and disease resistant.

During the period of our study maximum of the total cropped area in the state had always been under food grains. The area under cash crops i.e. cotton, sugarcane etc. was very small. The area under food grains continued to increase and under cash crops shrink. From 1966-67 to 1979-80, the area under total food grains increased from 64.3% to 72.9%.⁵

The proper utilization of land was another important factor leading to

2. T.J. Byres; 'The Dialectic of India's Green Revolution', *South Asian Review* (1972), 5 (2), pp. 107-08.

3. B. Venkateswarlu: *Dynamics of Green Revolution In India*, New Delhi, 1985, p. 10.

4. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, OUP, New Delhi, 2004, pp. 321-322.

5. *Statistical Abstracts of Punjab*, Years 1966 and 1980.

the Green Revolution. There was considerable increase in the net area sown during the period from 1960 to 1980.

Table : Classification of Area in Punjab (Thousand Hectare)⁶

Year	Total Geographical Area	Net Area Sown	Area Sown more than once	Total Cropped Area
1960-61	5036	3757	975	4732
1980-81	5036	4191	2572	6763
2004-05	5036	4200	3732	7932

The net area sown in Punjab in 1980 was 4191 thousand hectares which formed 83% of the total geographical area.

The above Table shows that in the period of 20 years from 1960 to 1980 the net area sown in the state increased from 3757 to 4191 thousand hectares, that means an increase of 434 thousand hectares.

From 1980 to 2004 in a period of 24 years, the net area sown has increased by only 9 thousand hectares.

From 1960 to 1980, the total cropped area has increased from 4732 to 6763 thousand hectares, which means an increase of 2031 thousand hectares.

From 1980-2004, the total cropped area has increased from 6763 to 7932 thousand hectares, which means an increase of only 1169 thousand hectares.

High Yield Varieties (HYV) were the focus of the green revolution. HYV refers to the seeds that produced shorter forms of plants which converted fertilizer more efficiently than the taller traditional forms in the production of many crops, particularly wheat. The promise of the green revolution was thus increased production of a variety of foodgrains in the Third World. The possibility of bringing increased self sufficiency in food production with subsequent improvements in the prosperity of peasants in many developing and politically unstable countries existed.

From the year 1960 till 1980, there was progressive increase in the area under high yielding varieties of two major crops, i.e. wheat and rice.

Table below shows this trend : ('000 Metric tonnes)

Year	Rice	Wheat	Total Cereals
1960-61	227	1400	2160
1980-81	1183	2812	4513
2004-2005	2647	3481	6311

6. *Statistical Abstracts of Punjab*, Year 1961, Year 1981 and Year 2005.

In ancient times also, man was aware of the technique of increasing the crop yield. First of all man learnt to use cattle dung and farm wastes to increase the productivity of crops. Until 1840 the use of farmyard manure held sway and it is only during the last 130 years that fertilizers have gradually made their impact felt.⁷

Farmyard manure is a complete manure. The composition of farmyard manure varies from place to place depending upon the kind of animals, their age etc. On an average, it contains 0.5 percent nitrogen, 0.25 percent phosphorus and 0.5 percent potassium. In addition, it contains many other secondary and micronutrient elements.

These are the materials which supply nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium, etc. to plants. Such materials are termed as chemical fertilizers. These fertilizers constitute another important, rather crucial input for agricultural production.

Tabl : Consumption of Chemical Fertilizers in Punjab⁸
(‘000 Nutrients Tonnes)

Year	Nitrogenous	Phosphatic	Potassic	Total (NPK)
1960-61	5	—	—	5
1980-81	526	207	29	762
2004-2005	1202	307	44	1553

Besides the use of pesticides, fungicides and herbicides considerably reduced yield uncertainty in agriculture and pushes production level.

Cropping pattern largely depends on irrigation. By far the most important factor which has contributed to the Green Revolution in Punjab is the high percentage of irrigated area, particularly by tubewells. Wells, Canals and Tubewells are the main sources of irrigation. Three main canal systems i.e.

The Upper Bari Doab Canal (UBDC),

The Sirhind Canal

The Western Jamuna Canal fell to the share of Indian Punjab.

The construction of the Bhakra Canal system was the biggest landmark in canal-irrigation development in Punjab after independence. It was completed in 1954.

7. M.S. Randhawa, *Green Revolution - A Case Study of Punjab*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1974, p. 111.

8. *Statistical Abstracts of Punjab*, Year 1961, Year 1981 and Year 2005.

Table: Net Area Irrigated by source in Punjab.⁹**(‘000 Hectares)**

Year	Canals	Tubewells	Other Sources
1970-71	1292	1591	5
1980-81	1430	1939	13
2004-2005	1108	2919	8

With all these inputs the production of principal crops was bound to increase. There was appreciable increase in yield and production of major crops in Punjab during the period from 1966-1980. Rice and wheat has shown highest growth rate during this period. Table below shows the results.

Table: Production of Principal Crops in Punjab¹⁰**(Thousands Metric Tonnes)**

Year	Rice	Wheat	Total Cereals
1960-1961	229	1742	2453
1980-1981	3233	7677	11717
2004-2005	10437	14695	25635

Thus, we can say that the yield per acre of principal crops doubled and then increased manifold.

The green revolution scientists and the American proponents of the new technology are criticized on a number of fronts. The geostrategic, political motives of the western capitalist exporters of green revolution technology were questioned by critics. The belief that unstable, newly independent governments were vulnerable to rural, peasant-based leftist insurgency is cited as a concern of the democratic west. The green revolution was a means of stemming such political uprisings. By bringing economics gains to the countryside, potential political animosity towards the central governments would be defused. A criticism related to the previous item but perhaps more compelling, is an economic exploitation theory. As the success of the new seeds depended on chemicals and fertilizers produced mainly in the developed west, an argument pointing to the creation of a relationship in which the third world governments would become inextricably linked to multinational chemical producers was put forth. Thus, the humanitarian motives cited earlier were interpreted by critics as profit and control motives. Finally, given the necessity of intense fertilizer and chemical use, as well as intense

9. *Statistical Abstracts of Punjab*, Year 1961, Year 1981 and Year 2005.

10. *Statistical Abstracts of Punjab*, Year 1961, Year 1981 and Year 2005.

irrigation, potential ecological degradation was cited as a tangible negative by product of the green revolution. Thus pros and cons of green revolution methods existed and both were borne out in the Punjab case. What was not widely anticipated or forecast, however, was the political volatility which currently exists and largely originated as a consequence of the green revolution.

The issue of equality is central to the study of the Punjab crisis. Crisis suggest that green revolution demands on natural resources created inequality in access to necessary points. Indeed, new input demands in the areas of natural resources and credit necessary for implementation of HYV were important in Punjab. Thus cooperatives were established in an attempt to facilitate the equitable spread of new technology to all farmers, large and small scale. Critics cite the cooperatives in Punjab as "elite controlled", and thus heavily biased toward large scale production in terms of success to inputs such as fertilizer, tubewells for irrigation, and bank financing. However, while acknowledging a class bias in terms of control of rural cooperatives in Punjab during the 1960s-1970s, the allotment and spread of inputs was not biased toward the larger scale farmer per se.¹¹ The coops were shown to have had a marginal role in causing unequal access to inputs inside the state. Instead, inequalities between small and large scale farming operations were caused by population pressure and irrigation shortfalls.¹²

The 21% population increase in Punjab between 1961 and 1971 is cited as the most plausible explanation of the increase in the number of small farms holdings.¹³ The population increase in Punjab is also a central factor in the dynamics of the grievances of Punjab Sikhs against the government.

In spite of all the criticism, agricultural progress was witnessed in India in general and Punjab in particular. The whole progress in the form of Green Revolution can be summed up in the words of S.H. Whitewater. After his visit to Punjab in 1975, S.H. Whitewater, Director of Agriculture at Michigan State University stated that, "The greatest progress of all time in agricultural development has not been in the USA; it has been in Punjab.... Punjab probably made more agricultural progress in the last ten years than any other region on the face of the earth at all time."¹⁴

11. Norman K. Nicholson, "Landholding, Agricultural Modernization, and Local Institutions in India : Emphasis on Punjab : 1960-1970", *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 32, 1984 : 574.

12. *Ibid.*, 575-577.

13. *Ibid.*, 576.

14. Pritam Singh, *Punjab Economy : The Emerging Pattern*, New Delhi, 1995, p. 10.

LESSONS OF PUNJAB MODEL OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Gian Singh*

Very often, we start contemplating data collection as a big achievement. In actual, the challenge before us is to find out a suitable solution to the problem. Scatty statements and illogical arguments, bereft of scientific analysis of information, are put forward to exaggerate the problems being faced by the economy and its sub-sectors. Recommendations made to solve the problem then turn out to be impressionistic in nature. Economics must not be divorced from Ethics and Psychology, otherwise it will generate into a tangled jungle of figures and curves, in which the mind is lost.¹ Thus, ethics and social values on which the foundations of a society rest should be preserved and crystallized. Social scientists should adopt an upright and even-handed approach while collecting and analyzing data pertaining to indicators of economic development and problems emerging out of the adoption of a specific development strategy.

On the basis of estimates generated by the 59th Round of National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) many economists, educationists, spokesman for the corporate sector and planner and policy makers have commented upon the plight of the small and marginal farmers. Invariably they have pleaded, overtly or covertly, for the “exit” or “safe exit” of such farmers from the agriculture sector and their absorption in the manufacturing and service sectors of the economy. In order to strengthen their viewpoint, a number of preconceived and result-oriented studies are pressed into service. One such disoriented statement thus states that 40 per cent farmers at the national level and 36.7 per cent in Punjab have expressed their willingness (responding to the NSSO questionnaire) to leave agriculture since agriculture has become relatively less profitable or uneconomic.² All such farmers are the poor marginal and small farmers.

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1. Har Dayal, Lala, *Hints For Self Culture*, p. 93, Jaico Publishing House, Mumbai, Twelve Jaico Impression, 2004.
2. Gill S.S, 'Suicides by Farmers', *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, June 13, 2007.

Experts at Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana, have further confounded the situation. In a report, prepared for the Punjab Farmers Commission, it is observed that more than 2 lakh farmers in the state of Punjab, during the last one and a half decades, have left agriculture occupation. Further, it is highlighted that although crisis in Punjab agriculture manifested in the early nineties itself, it deepened after the year 2000. The indebted farmers sold-off their land considering agriculture as a non-viable occupation and have joined the rank of wage earners. Some of them work as casual labourers and some others are self-employed. The experts at PAU observe that these petty land owners are better-off after they quit agriculture. They faced the problem of abject poverty when they worked as cultivators. Contrary wise, now, they are better off while working outside the agriculture sector and have been able to double their annual income. These findings they claim are compatible with the data, observations and arguments that have been put-forth by others on the basis of the NSSO estimates.³

Many people have expressed their opinion in this context. Two diametrically opposite opinions, one expressed by Darshan Kheri⁴ and another by Karam Barsat⁵ make an interesting reading. Kheri, referring to Karl Marx, has expressed the opinion that a dispassionate look into the world history indicates that a "detached" peasant is likely to live not only a relatively better economic life but also becomes better-off intellectually and culturally. It would suffice to mention here that Kheri has reproduced only a part of thesis put forward by Karl Marx on peasantry. Karam Barsat's opinion is that the PAU report has raised many doubts about the efficacy of our agrarian policy. The public in general and those who are struggling to save the peasantry in particular should give a serious thought to the "spruced up" findings of the report. To him it appears that those who have been assigned the task of making policy for the betterment of the small farmers in the state (the Punjab Farmers Commission) have gone astray and become victims of vagueness from the very beginning. First, they describe all the farmers as "exit" ones who are employed in government and semi-government outfits, engaged in trade and manufacturing or have gone abroad leaving agriculture occupation. Second, rather than pinpointing the reasons behind agrarian crisis, they resorted to phony statements based on "fractured" survey. Third, to add emphasis to their conclusion-oriented enquiry, the experts have cited similar

3. Some observations published in Newspapers in October, 2007.

4. Kheri D., *Punjabi Tribune*, Chandigarh, December 21, 2007.

5. Barsat K., *Punjabi Tribune*, Chandigarh, November 28, 2007.

observations made by others on the basis of the N.S.S.O data. The disquisition presented by the Punjab Farmers Commission is expected to support ultimately the new economic policy being pursued by ruling classes in the country.

It is well documented that basic reason behind the crisis in agriculture lies in the imperialist policies crafted and implemented by the ruling classes, at the behest of international institutions like World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organization. Some of the vanguards of these policies were active participants in policy making during the green revolution era and continue to be "paid advisers" in the Punjab Farmers Commission. Their suggestions imply that the marginal and small farmers should go whole hog for self-employment outside agriculture and government should provide them training at subsidized rates. Such suggestions, devoid of reality, have distracted these "master craftsmen" from analyzing the raddled effects of development strategy being pursued in India. In actual, agrarian crisis in India which has almost ruined cottage and small scale industry requires a thorough investigation into the deleterious effects of new economic policy. It hardly needs any emphasis to state that regional economies are an integral part of the national economy. Love and political opinions can not be concealed..... Beware of the "Classical" and capitalistic economists who are hired or deluded apologists of Capitalism.⁶

That the small and marginal farmers in Punjab would live a better-off life after "detachment" from their land tantamounts to stating "logic is standing on its head." This is clearly brought out by the results of a survey of 241 marginal (up to 2.5 acres) and small farmers (more than 2.5 and up to 5 acres) in Punjab for the year 2003-04 spread of five agro climatic regions (Shivalik Foothills, Central Plains-North, Central Plains-South, Western Plains-South and Western Plains) covering five districts-one from each agro-climatic region of the state.⁷ A profile of poverty ridden households clearly brings out that 80.49 per cent of these households are living below the "extreme poverty" line, based on World Bank poverty norms.⁸ The percentage of marginal farmers below the poverty line comes to 94.06 per cent and that of small farmers is 70.71 per cent. Estimates pertaining to "ordinary poverty" line are much more distressing. Almost all the small and marginal farmers in the sample

6. Har Dayal, Lala, *op.cit.*, p. 94.

7. The author has used some of the unpublished data collected by his Ph.D. student Ms. Rupinder Kaur.

8. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/poverty#Measuring-Poverty>.

(99.58 per cent) are observed to be living below the ordinary poverty line. This disquieting feature of peasants' life in the state should help us in clearing the misconception about their becoming entrepreneurs after they retreat. This exhausted lot of the marginal and small farmers after disposing off their small holdings to the big farmers and corporate, would have nothing to fall back upon. Their pauperization is inevitable in the light of their circumstances. First, the moment they sell off their land, a major part of the sale proceeds will end up in clearing the outstanding loans. Second, a part of the proceeds they would prefer to use to fulfill their social needs that were kept pending for long on account of non-availability of funds. Third, in the absence of any logistic support from the state and negligible growth of employment opportunities in the manufacturing and service sectors of the Indian economy during 2004-05 over 1993-94, they may end up in using all their money to meet the current consumption needs of the family. Immediate or even staggered absorption of retreating farmers is a myth, given the dismal scenario of negative growth of employment in mining and quarrying and electricity, water etc. sectors.⁹ Another aspect of employment outside the agriculture sector needs a special mention. Majority of those employed in manufacturing and service sectors are earning merely to meet their basic needs. A higher dependency ratio in the case of the small and marginal farmers may force them continue to live below the poverty line even after their "exit" from agriculture. Let us not sink under the weight of our own doubts and misconceptions and steer clear of playing a subaltern role to further strengthen imperialism.

There is no denying the fact that in the process of agricultural transformation, transfer of population away from agriculture is inevitable to facilitate reduction in dependence on agriculture. That is why in the process of development, agriculture is considered as a "dying" occupation. But the question arises how? An answer to this lies partially in the farming system which we intend to embrace. At present, the most prevalent systems of farming across the world are small farming, capitalist or corporate farming, cooperative farming, state farming and collective farming. Which one of these should be adopted by us needs a serious examination. Given our socio-economic and political system, state and collective farming systems do not find any favour, although these systems have numerous advantages. We tried our hand at cooperative farming system but all the attempts ended up as a

9. Ramaswamy K.V., "Regional Dimension of Growth and Employment", *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. XLII No. 49, December 8-14, 2007, p. 48.

futile exercise. Capitalist or corporate farming system results in widening economic disparities, less employment and is exploitative by nature. Our opting for such a system would have serious economic, social and political implications. In spite of some shortcomings, small farming system fits better in our socio-economic and political environment. India should try earnestly to follow the Japanese land reforms pattern. Land reforms are usually thought of in terms of distributive justice alone. History provides us with evidence, however, that land reforms are equally necessary for faster rate of transition of higher productivity. For example, in Japan the major breakthrough in agricultural production came during and after the Second World War with effective abolition of the landlord-tenant system. Under this reform resident cultivators were permitted to retain only one *Cho* (2.45 acres) and absentee landlords no land at all. In the year 2004-05 average per hectare yield of paddy in Japan was 64.2 quintals and it was only 29 quintals in India.¹⁰ Given the food situation in India, there is need to encourage the small scale farming. The forced exodus of the small and marginal farmers from crop production will put in peril our food security. Implementation of agrarian reforms, skewed in favour of the small farmers, can retain them in agriculture. Additional institutional support can make them viable (economically). This can also pave the way for the medium and big farmers to become entrepreneurs. Being educated, aware and empowered and having resources, it is relatively easier for them to venture into other sectors of the economy. A positive attitude of the state is indispensable in this process. Otherwise, the crucification of the small and marginal farmers being advocated by the so called experts in the name of development is fraught with serious consequences.

10. Government of India, *Economic Survey 2006-07*, Table 8.4, Delhi, 2007, p. 160.

PUNJAB UNDER THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION (1849-1853)

*Charanjit Kaur**

The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1839 was followed by a state of anarchy, confusion and chaos in the Punjab. Taking advantage of such conditions, the British fought two wars with the Sikhs in 1845-46 and 1848-49, respectively giving a crushing defeat to the latter.¹ As a result, the Punjab became a part of the British Empire in India by the Governor General's Proclamation of March 1849.² Lord Dalhousie in order to set the administrative machinery of the Punjab in motion, appointed a Board of Administration in 1849 with an adequate staff of civil and military officers.³

A board of administration was setup in the Punjab which consisted of three persons: Sir Henry Lawrence as President, Mr. John Lawrence⁴ and Mr. Mansel both of civil service as members, generally known as the triumvirate. Under them were placed several young British civil and military officers, chosen for the service by Lord Dalhousie.

Henry Lawrence, on whose shoulders fell the task of enforcing the new policy was by far, the best man that could have been selected for this purpose. He had come into close contact with Sikh politics since 1840, as a political assistant, first at Ludhiana, and then at Ferozepur. He understood the Sikhs, well, as also their virtues and vices. Since March 1846, he had seen to the fulfillment of the treaty. John Lawrence wielded enormous powers, but he resisted Governor General Lord Hardinge's insistence on active interference everywhere.

Sir Henry Lawrence himself undertook a series of peregrinations of the entire province, which although transferring much of his burden to the other two and offending Dalhousie, did an immense good to the Punjab. He

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1. *Punjab Administrative Report, 1901-1902*, Lahore, 1902, pp. 18-19; S.M. Latif, *History of Punjab*, Calcutta, 1891, p. 539.
2. B.J. Hasrat, *Anglo Sikh Relations 1799-1849*, Hoshiarpur, 1968, p. 2; also see B.J. Hasrat, *The Punjab Papers*, Hoshiarpur, 1970, pp. 121-140.
3. Foreign Department Secret Consultation, 28 April, 1849, Nos. 18-29.
4. S.S. Thorburn, *The Punjab in Peace and War*, London, 1904, p. 180.

studied the people, their prejudices and character personally and mixing the knowledge thus collected with the kindness of his habit, he conducted the policy of this Government.

Next to Sir Henry Lawrence on the Board came Henry Lawrence's brother John Lawrence. His knowledge of Sikh races was only less than that of his brother, while in mastery of details financial skill, in power of continuous work, and in general civil training he was far superior to him. A man who had ruled the Jullundur Doab during the last two years in the way in which John Lawrence had ruled it, and with the results which the prolonged and doubtful struggle of Second Anglo Sikh War was brought into full relief, was clearly this man to have a potential voice in the rule of the four other Doabs. According to Gough, Henry Lawrence having already acted as Resident in the Punjab, "...There was no other man who had already so effectively and so widely natives.... Next to him stood his brother John; harder of head, less tender of heart: his theories perhaps more convincing to the Western minds but less appreciated by the Oriental."⁵

To each member of the Board was assigned a task, suited to his aptitudes and congenial to his genius. Henry devolved the political and military duties of the disarming of the Punjab, the demobilization of the Khalsa army, the defence of the frontier, the reorganisation of the new Punjabee and several other regiments.⁶ He was to temper the cold winds of British Supremacy to the sect which was once dominant, the powerful and still seething with indignation. He was to apply the balm and heal the wounds of all who would feel keenly the loss of their former powers and privileges. John who had already "achieved a high reputation as an administrator"⁷ was to grapple with the intricacies of finance and land settlement.

The third member, Mr. Mansel was a man of an altogether different stamp. Thoughtful, contemplative and pacific, he was very conciliatory and always preferred the middle course in every matter.⁸ He had a legal and technical turn of mind. For this reason he was entrusted with the judicial department.

He however, did not long stay on the board. In 1851, he was replaced by Robert Montgomery, the common friend of the Lawrence's. All the three

5. General Sir Charles Gough and Arthur D. Innes, *The Sikhs and Sikh Wars*, London, 1897, p. 267.

6. John William Kay, *History of the Sepoy War*, London, 1870, p. 52.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Lee Warner, *Life of Marquess Dalhousie*, London, Vol. 1, 1904, p. 255.

members, besides working in their spheres, were jointly responsible for the formulation and execution of the policies. The system as Kay remarks was "of divided labour and common responsibility".⁹ Each was answerable for the acts of the other two. The procedure was somewhat as follows. All official papers were circulated to the three members of the Board, and each member, recorded his opinion on every question that came before him. The matter then came before the Board and the decision was taken collectively.¹⁰ The system was admirable provided the members shared the same views. But was "calculated only to enhance the ordinary faults of divided councils, and to eventuate in compromises where action was required".¹¹ As a result of this the administrative machinery broke down after four years. But not until its essential mission had been fulfilled i.e. the pacification and consolidation of the Punjab.

"Boards rarely have any talent", wrote Napier "and that of the Punjab offers no exception to the rule".¹² But his opinions found as little favour with Henry, as with Dalhousie. He advocated the establishment of military rule in the Punjab. Henry "to whose principles of statesmanship military rule was repugnant",¹³ regarded his utterances and writings as mischievous. Dalhousie to whom it would have meant the transfer of authority from his hands to those of the commander-in-chief was equally opposed to Napier's Plans.

After annexation disarmament of the Khalsa Army was the first problem with the Lawrence Administration. The liquidation of Khalsa army led to unemployment on a large scale. Apart from the general administration, some few measures may be noticed here as being peculiar to the Punjab. The first step after annexation was the disbandment of the late Sikh army. The men had been drawn chiefly from the class of peasant proprietors. They now reverted to the ancestral holdings, where their rights and interest were found to be secured by British arrangements. They were disarmed on being discharged, and no swords were left to be turned into ploughshares. But they settled down at once to agriculture, which was at that time more prosperous and profitable than it had ever been within living memory. Defensive

9. John William Kay, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

10. John William Kay, *The History of the Administration of the East India Company*, London, 1853, p. 453.

11. Sir Herbert, Edwards and Merivale Harman, *Life of Henry Lawrence*, London, 1872, p. 138.

12. Napier quoted in Edwards and Merivale, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

arrangements were made for the Trans-Indus Frontiers, running as it did for full eight hundred miles at the base of the mountains which surround the valley of Peshawar and then stretching southwards, separate India from Afghanistan. To guard this long extended frontier, a special body of troops, some twelve thousand men, horse and foot, was organised and styled "The Punjab Frontier Force" and it was placed not under the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, but under the Board of Administration.¹⁴

Agriculture was the backbone of Punjab. It was the primary source of Punjab. The Punjab peasant proprietor during British rule, as nowadays, was the most industrious and enterprising tiller of soil in India. The peasant proprietor formed the backbone of the Punjab peasantry which was famous for its sturdiness and virility. Prior to the annexation of the kingdom of Lahore, where the facilities for cultivation were favourable he brought bulk of the cultivable land under cultivation. Peasant proprietors from the districts of Sialkot, Amritsar, Jullundur, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana, Ambala, Lahore and Gujarat in large number settled in the canal colonies.¹⁵

At the time of annexation it produced a good quality of cotton.¹⁶ Explorations of its natural resources confirmed the anticipation that it could be developed on a large scale. Tea growing proved successful¹⁷ and encouraged by the forced interruption of the trade relations with Russia during the Crimean War, attempts to cultivate hemp and flax commenced.¹⁸ Centre of these activities was the Agri-Horticultural Society of the Punjab founded in 1851. Under its patronage, a large scale programme of "development of vast resources" of the province took shape sponsored by the Board of Administration and the Governor General himself.¹⁹

14. Sir Richard Temple, *Lord Lawrence*, London, 1890, p.55; The First Punjab Administration Report, 1849-51, p.84.

15. L. Middleton, *Report on the Census of India 1921*, Vol. XV, Part I, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore 1923, Subsidiary Table IV, p. 98; and VII, p. 162.

16. Ganda Singh (ed.), *Private Correspondence Relating to the Anglo-Sikh Wars*, Amritsar/Patiala. 1955, p.165 (Introduction).

17. Foreign Political Consultation., 14 November. 1856, Nos. 230-232.

18. *Ibid.*, 11 August, 1854, Nos. 275-277; Press List of Old Records in the Punjab Civil Secretariat, Vol. XVI, No. 1381, p. 362; No. 1414, p. 372; Selections From the Records of Government of India, No. XVIII, General Report on the Administration of the Punjab Territories, from 1854-55 to 1855-56 inclusive, Calcutta 1856, p. 104, para 194.

19. General Report on the Administration of the Punjab Territories, from 1854-55 to 1855-56 inclusive, p. 104, para 193.

The Agri-Horticultural Society made experiments with New Orleans cotton, Othaleite sugarcane, flax, tobacco, marigold and turnips, in various districts so that these crops might be substituted and the supply of wheat reduced. To encourage the peasants to take to the new crops, the Government offered handsome rewards to those who took to the cultivation of flax. As a result of all these efforts, the agriculturists were everywhere showing signs of settling down to prosperous industry by the end of 1853.

The British policy was marked by an unusual cautiousness in the complex field of agriculture relations necessarily effecting the major part of the population. Under such circumstances, even the introduction of some inevitable innovations appeared rather as a continuance of the basic lines of the land system developed under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In his Despatch to the Board of Administration the Governor General strongly recommended to preserve the traditional organs of the peasantry like village coparcenaries, "so that the only material alteration will consist in the introduction of European as Supervisors and Executive officers."²⁰ Maharaja Ranjit Singh had striven to protect the cultivator of all soil, because it was he who was the tax-payer par excellence for the state. The Britons followed that way as far as in compatibility with the socio-economic conditions of a predominant capitalistic society in Great Britain. In the terms of the then prevailing political economy it meant the legal sanction of the class of peasant proprietors, because they as cultivators had alone a true interest in the improvement of the soil,²¹ whereas the rule of the landlords, according to James Stuart Mill, resulted in such intolerable concomitants like the demoralised English working class and the completely impoverished Irish peasantry.²²

Agricultural skill of the peasant proprietor varied from tribe to tribe. It is evident from the comparative study of four major tribes-Jat, Rajput, Arain²³ and Jangli²⁴ with distinctive characteristics as agriculturist. Of all the agricultural tribes found in the province, the Jats were by far the most important. They excelled other tribes in the art of crop husbandry. They

20. Despatch constituting the Board of Administration, para 7. Foreign Secret Consultation, 28 April. 1849, Nos. 73-75.

21. James Stuart. *The History of British*, Vol. V, London, 1820, pp. 414-415.

22. James Stuart Mill, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 359.

23. *Arain*: The market-gardening castes, the *Arain* is perhaps more skillful cultivators on a small scale, but they cannot rival the Jats as landlords. See Sir Denzil Charles Jeff' Ibbetson, *Punjab Castes*, Patiala, 1995, pp. 103.189-195.

24. *Janglis* were the people belonging to the nomad pastoral tribes of the western plains of the Punjab in the pre-colonisation days.

were regarded by the British as flowers of Punjab population and were said to have spread agriculture and wealth from Jumuna to Jehlum.²⁵ Within the jat tribe the Jat Sikhs of Majha were at the top.²⁶ The Rajputs were next in numbers but were not equally good cultivators. In agricultural skill, *Arains* were second only to the Jats in the cultivation of all sorts of crops particularly excelling in vegetable gardening. The *Janglis* were numerous in the sparsely cultivated tracts of the western plains but in the art of cultivation they were considered inferior to Jats and *Arain*.²⁷

The wells which were the largest source of irrigation were constructed mainly by peasant proprietors because landlords for the most part showed little inclination to invest capital in land. The British administrators of the Punjab observed from time to time that since the annexation of the Punjab the peasant proprietors at their own cost vastly improved their holdings especially by the construction of wells.²⁸

Resources at the disposal of the peasant proprietors were relatively large and the wastage of human and cattle force in their case was the minimum. They generally had larger holdings than the tenants.²⁹ Where the size of holding was small a considerable amount of bullock power was wasted.³⁰ The peasant proprietor kept better cattle and used his cattle power for the cultivation operations. On the other hand tenant kept cattle to supplement his income from agriculture.³¹

Agriculture being the mainstay of the province, it was necessary to stabilise it by making it less dependent on the caprices of nature. The Punjab with its rivers and rivulets was especially suited for canal irrigation. To free the mind of the cultivator from the uncertainty of the seasons and to guard

25. *Punjab Administration Report, 1849-51*, Para 10, p. 4

26. H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*, Vol. 1. Patiala 1970, p.12; L.A. Grant, *Final Report on the Revision of Settlement 1888-93 of the Amritsar District in the Punjab*, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore 1893, Paras 1,4, pp. 1-3 .

27. Amanat Khan, *Sons of Soil: Studies of Indian Cultivator*, Delhi, 1941, pp. 57-64; Dial Singh, *Kissa Bar di Abadi Da*, Lahore, 1896, pp. 25-29.

28. J.M. Donie, *Punjab Land Administration Manual*, Lahore, 1930, p. 229.

29. In Jehlum district for example, by 1872-73 the number of peasant proprietors and tenants was 51,491 and 58,187 respectively. But the area under tenants holdings was only 261, 644 acres while the cultivating proprietors cultivated 500,000 Acres: *Punjab Administration Reports 1872-73*, Para 41, pp. 15-16.

30. H. Calvert, *The Size and Distribution of Agricultural holdings in the Punjab*, Lahore, 1925, pp. 10-11.

31. H. Calvert, *The Wealth and Welfare of the Punjab*, 2nd Edition, Lahore, 1936, pp. 90-91.

him against the visitation of famines, had been from the very first, leading items on the programme of the Lawrence's. The Board gave its attention to the development of the resources of the province by means of improved methods of irrigation and channels of communication. During Henry's Residency, he had studied the feasibility of so enlarging the Husli Canal³² or *Shahi Nahur* (Royal Stream) as to intersect the entire Baree Doab, the most important region of the Punjab.³³ Robert Napier had already examined and surveyed the line of the enlarged canal. This enlarged canal better known as *Baree Doab Canal* was to revive dead villages and create new hamlets throughout a course of two hundred and forty seven miles. Besides this monumental work, the Board undertook the repair and improvement of the already existing canals in Derajat and Multan. Had Henry been free to have his way he could have initiated more projects of canal building. But his hands were tied by John, his brother and senior colleague; though anxious to undertake the works of development held that all such schemes must be regulated according to the financial means available in the province.³⁴

Henry on the other hand had an intuitive conviction that once the schemes for the amelioration of the people were executed successfully, all the difficulties on the score of expenses would disappear³⁵ and in the long run the government would recover all such expenditure. But John thought in terms of the narrow economy which governed the minds of administrators of 19th Century. He planned to make the province financially self sufficient and feared that his brother's development plans would interference with his aim. As usual Dalhousie inclined towards John's views and upheld them against those of his brother. The gulf between the brothers grew wider with each succeeding year and the work was done with increasing friction.

In spite of the divided counsels and growing estrangement, the Lawrences devoted most of their energies to the building up a solid structure

32. Husli Canal or the Royal Stream was dug by the Mughuls to supply the Royal Water-works fountains of Shalimar Gardens and the palace at Lahore. It was about 110 miles long starting from the point where the Ravi leaves the hills and ending at Lahore. A remarkable irrigation work in itself but after use to the country as it only served the Royal needs.

33. The Doab includes Lahore and Amritsar, the political and commercial capitals of the Punjab. Its upper division by Jats, the sturdy peasants it has attracted attention of all the previous rulers who had constructed and worked smaller canals for several generations. *Punjab Administration Report 1849-51*, p. 134.

34. Sir Richard Temple, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

35. Sir Richard Temple, *Men and Events of My time in India*. London, 2nd Edition. 1882, p. 65.

of government, which for many years gained for the Punjab, its deserved distinction as the 'model province of India.'³⁶ Next to canals, the roads engaged the Board's attention. They formulated a very comprehensive plan of intersecting the province with roads, bridges and viaducts. Robert Napier undertook the tasks of constructing the Grand Trunk Road from Lahore to Peshawar. From this trunk line were to radiate branch lines in almost every direction. All the important Military stations and cantonments were linked together.³⁷ All the roads that were planned could not be completed during the short period of four years. But the work being necessarily one of preparation reflects much credit on their efforts when we realise that within such a short period 1,349 miles of road were constructed, 2,487 miles traced and 5,272 surveyed all exclusive of minor cross and branch roads.³⁸

The Sikh polity was essentially feudal in structure. While there was no material difference in the policy towards land assessment and general taxation, there was much discussion on the policy to be followed towards *Jagirdars*. *Jagirs* had been the grants of land made under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, free from any charge except military service, and they were a source from which wealth and power of the Sikh leaders was drawn. The problem of dealing with the holders of these grants, the *Jagirdars*, was difficult as each case required individual legal treatment, and it was, therefore a source of disputes.

The whole question took on a different colour when seen through the eyes of John Lawrence—the hard headed administrator, unbiased by any such feeling for the *Sardars*. He regarded the Chiefs and *Jagirdars* as Parasitic growths who lived on the blood of the honest *ryot* and put a heavy strain on the state exchequer. Further according to him the high dignitaries and feudal Chiefs were a great hindrance in bringing the people in direct contact with the benevolent British influence. John Lawrence represented in his days the imperialism of Dalhousie. The gradual elimination of the princes and other intermediaries, and the establishment of direct British rule were the central features of the latter's policy. Besides, his strong views on the elimination of *Jagirdars*, the question of finance influenced his mind. The British had granted good pensions to the *Jagirdars* in lieu of their lands which were renewed every year. Besides granting pensions to big *Zamindars* and *Jagirdars* pensions were also granted to their widows, musicians, physician and servants. If any *Jagirdar* had taken part in the upsurge, he would have lost his big pension,

36. S.S. Thorburn Temple, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

37. *The First Punjab Administration Report 1849-51*, pp. 129-30.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

the mainstay of his life. Therefore these *Jagirdars* used their influence to prevent rebellion.

The Board of Administration which governed the Punjab from April 1849 to January 1853 could not continue for long because Henry and John held strongly divergent opinion on some important subjects. By May, 1852, the situation became untenable and both brothers offered their resignation, and asked for the Hyderabad Residency, which by that time had fallen vacant.

These resignations gave Dalhousie an opening for which he had been waiting for a long time. He had long ago made up his mind which brother to keep. As early as December 22, 1849 he had written to the President of the Board of control, "I shall not be sorry when he (Henry) goes, because although he has many fine qualities, I think his brother John, take him all in all, is a better man fitted in every way for that place".³⁹ When two men differ so utterly in ideas, sympathy and experience, as did Lord Dalhousie and Henry, it is not surprising that the latter's superior claims were ignored and John was appointed as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab.⁴⁰

Shortly before his exit from the Punjab, The Lahore Chronicle wrote'; "Sir Henry Lawrence's successor can never be to the Punjab what Sir Henry was. The Sikhs have always known Lawrence as a friend, whether in the Khyber pass, with their regiments co-operating with Pollock; as Resident at Lahore or as President of the Board of Administration, he has been ever a staunch and hardy comrade to their troops, a source of honour to their Chiefs and of justice to their labouring classes; and thus it is that, at this moment, the plan-less ministers, powerless Sardars, Jagirless Jagirdars, disbanded soldiers, and other fragments of Ranjit's broken court and army, "find in Sir Henry Lawrence a natural representative, such as they can find no-where else, and must inevitably be 'disfranchised' by his loss".⁴¹

The Board of Administration which governed the Punjab from April 1849 to January 1853, did precisely the work, it was expected and meant to do. It accomplished what by unanimous verdict has been acclaimed as "a brilliant episode in British Indian annals"⁴², Maud Diver regards the joint rule of the Lawrence's "unsurpassed for efficiency, unequalled for the rapidly and thoroughness with which a disorganized state was brought into order, an

39. Dalhousie to the President of Board of Control, Dec. 22, 1849 Quoted in Lee Warner, *Life of Marquess Dalhousie*, p. 255.

40. Foreign Department of Political Consultation, 4 February 1853, No. 129.

41. The Lahore Chronicle, January 5, 1853; quoted in Edwards and Merivale, *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, London, 1872, p. 207.

42. Sir Richard Temple, *Men and Events of My Time in India*, London, 2nd Edition, p. 65.

embittered and turbulent race turned into a loyal and contented population".⁴³ Sir Richard Temple goes further and says, "The Board's operations were masterly in conception, thorough in foundation and business like in details. So far the work has never been excelled and seldom rivalled in other provinces, either before or since that era."⁴⁴

Punjab system of government is so simple, so entirely developed to the genius of the people, that it must like truth, prevail, sooner or later over the entire peninsula.

A foreign rule is necessarily galling to a proud and high-spirited people, nurtured for decades on war and conquest and accustomed to their own system of government. The Board realised this and from the very start took care to see that their measures caused the minimum of inconvenience or injury to the few and maximum of benefit to the many. The old aristocracy and Jagirdars inevitably suffered from the change of rule but owing to the presence of Henry, they were passing away from the scene, not with precipitate ruin, but in gradual and mitigated decline. On the ruins of the by-gone aristocracy, was rising a new landed and industrial aristocracy. A healthy middle class has been termed the backbone of society. For nearly a decade due to the unsettled conditions, the commercial and agricultural classes of Punjab, who constituted the middle class, were in an impoverished condition.⁴⁵ Now with the establishment of orderly government, the country was showing unmistakable signs of recuperation. A healthy middle class was emerging and the Punjab was regaining its economic equilibrium. As has already been said foreign domination, however benevolent can never be free from economic and political exploitation. But in the earlier stages, the exploitation of the Punjab was less systematic and much less in extent, when compared to other parts of India. Moreover the pioneers of British rule in the Punjab were

43. Maud Diver, *Honaria Lawrence*, London, 1936, p. 373.

44. Sir Richard Temple, *Lord Lawrence*, London, 1890, pp. 52-53.

45. Colonel Steinback (who was intimately associated with the Government of Ranjit Singh for a number of years and who had an opportunity of observing the scenes of anarchy and fratricidal struggle) writes: "Since the demise of the old lion (Ranjit Singh) trade has declined, owing to the distracted and insecure state of the country; the robberies upon the high road, vexatious exactions in the shape of the duties and tolls, the absorption of capital in military armaments and civil contests, have all had their effect in checking and cramping mercantile operations. In ordinary and peaceful times and under a wholesome system of rule, no doubt a very large trade might be firmly established." *The Punjab*, London, 1845, p. 86.

more anxious to gain the goodwill of the people and thus to make the new province, a durable and reliable bulwark of the British Empire in India.

Thus, within short period of four years of its life, that from 1849 to 1853, the Board established a "system of administration compete in all branches - military, civil and financial, in addition to which it provided roads, canals and jails, put an end to *thuggee* and dacoity, codified the laws, refined the coinage and promoted agriculture." Education was also developed, though the indigenous schools declined.

Book-Reviews

The Regime of Maharaja Ranjit Singh,

by Madanjit Kaur, Unistar, Chandigarh, 2007, pp. xv+223, Price Rs. 395/-

Professor Madanjit Kaur is a well known scholar of the Punjab History as well as Sikh religion and institutions in the making since the 14th century. She has a deep but very clear sense of historiography and its objectives. As a result this feature of the scholar and the book under review denies to be 'a treatise on the administration and polity of Maharaja Ranjit Singh' (ix). More than Sikh polity or the rise and fall of Empires and exploits of the kings and emperors she has been concerned with "the story of the development of human civilizations and communities.." (*ibid*). She tries to reveal the memory of the monarchs and public leaders "as lessons of history for the future benefit of the mankind." (*ibid*). Referring to the patronage ability of the Sikh Maharaja, Professor Kaur says it was committed to the promotion of art, architecture, literature and learning. (p. xi). Little wonder if the chapter one by Professor Kaur deals with 'cultural significance of the symbols on the coins of Maharaja Ranjit Singh : Documentary Evidence of his secularism' (pp. 01-23).

What needs to be stressed in the Book under review is the author's focus on the 'cultural and religious antiquity' the symbols in use for the coinage of the Maharaja. For example the symbol of *Pipal* tree stood 'derived from the heritage of mythology of India.' Likewise the symbols of Maharaja as *Shankha* were referring to Vishnu and Shiva respectively. (p.11). The other symbols are *Trisul* and *Kamal*. The *Kamal* reminded goddess Lakshmi. According to Professor Kaur, the Maharaja employed the language of Muslims for the legends and instructions on his coinage. (p.17). Further, these characteristics of coinage bore "testimony to the eclectic religion of the ruler as well as mytho-religion of his times." (p. 16).

Chapter two of the book under consideration is entitled, 'The Harmandir and Maharaja Ranjit Singh.' Obviously the chapter deals with Golden Temple, Amritsar (pp. 24-30) clearly the author shows the significance of Harmandir for the Sikh ruler of Lahore while dealing with the British or the East India Company and her Empire. We are told that Maharaja had built a *bunga* for himself and it was 'close to the sacred tank' (p. 25). The Sikh ruler had also

contributed revenue free land grants "worthover a lakh of rupees a year and to the 'ardasias' and the *Mutasaddis* of the Harmandir" (pp. 25-26). Surprisingly the writer under review has relied for this information on Ganda Singh rather than on Sohan Lal Suri. What was Ranjit Singh's view or relationship towards Harmandir between 1796 and 1805? The book of Professor Kaur is silent. But she does not fail to mention that the disputes relating to the distribution of offerings in the Temple after 1805 were settled by Ranjit Singh. "It also implies that the management of the Harmandir was under his control" (p. 26), who was the incharge of and for the protection of buildings of Golden Temple? Was he appointed by the Lahore ruler? These issues have not bothered Madanjit Kaur. When and why did the British become interested in establishing their own control over Harmandir? Did they simply follow the example of Ranjit Singh? Historically the answer can not be in the positive because it would deny the causes and justification of Gurudwara Reform Movements by the Khalsa after 1849 A.D.

Chapter four of the book deals with the modernization of Army under Ranjit Singh. Here, the author has given importance to Holkar's visit to Harmandir in 1805 (p. 46). Holkar did advise to the sikh ruler that his army "modeled on medieval lines was no match to the forces like English with whom he was anticipating to fight" (p. 47). Impressed by Holkar's advise, the sikh ruler decided to modernize his army and inducted some European adventurers to reform it (p. 49). With these reforms the infantry and the Artillery branches emerged modern in their shape and functioning (pp. 55-57).

Maharaja Ranjit Singh's role in the development of Art is covered by chapter sixth of this book. It is spread from page 129 to 141. However, it is chapter no. eight that treats the historians rather than Ranjit Singh (pp. 153-89). This is last chapter of the book.

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Punjab Da Batvara Te Sikh Neta (Punjabi)

by Dr. Kirpal Singh, Singh Brothers, Amritsar, pp. 140, Price Rs. 80/-

The issue of Partition attracts academic attention because of three factors: the historical pressure or circumstances leading to the division, the involvement of tragedy and implications of Partition. In this context, there is unanimity of scholarship on the later aspects but the first one remains central in the endless debate. The present work is an addition in providing a perspective to the understanding of the Partition phenomenon. It focuses on the political developments in Punjab from 1930's onwards alongwith riots, tragedy and voluntary efforts.

The author argues that the issue of division of Punjab was taken up at the national level by Sikh representatives during Round Table Conference in 1932 at London. After Muslim League's demand for Pakistan in 1940 the Sikhs raised the issue of Punjab division in different ways. The real objectives of 'Azad Punjab Resolution' and demand for 'Sikh State' by Shromani Akali Dal was to separate Muslim dominating areas. During Cabinet Mission Plan and also during appointment of Lord Mountbatten as Governor-General Akali leadership stressed on the division of Punjab to which the Congress had support.

An important demand of the Akali leadership was that the basis of division should be on property rights in land and the payment of land revenue. It was rejected both by the Viceroy and the Congress. The author puts the onus on Baldev Singh for ignoring Sikh leadership in accepting '3rd June Plan.' Further the demand of Master Tara Singh and Giani Kartar Singh for transfer of population alongwith the division was also rejected by the Viceroy. It was also not approved by Jinnah and Nehru. Giani Kartar Singh protested to the Governor Punjab that Baldev Singh had accepted '3rd June Plan' without taking acceptance of the Shromani Akali Dal.

The author is of the opinion that efforts made by the Akalis in July/August 1947 should have been attempted in May before the Plan. For example, a delegation of the Sikhs went to London on 6 August and protested there against injustice being done to the Sikhs. Similar was the fate with the invitation of Major J.M. Short who expressed his helplessness being late. Had the Sikhs asked Viceroy to invite Major Short earlier, the things might have been different. Further, V.P. Menon was in a position to understand

Congress's view and also views of Nehru and Patel. He, therefore, did not allow anything to happen that was not acceptable to the Congress. Similarly, Ismay, who was chief of staff of Lord Mountbatten knew Muslim perspective and was in touch with leaders of the Muslim league. The Sikhs had no communication channel through which they could influence Viceroy of their interests.

Thus the study brings out clearly that the ultimate outcome of Partition was in favour of the Muslims' demand. The future apprehensions of the Sikhs remained unattended because of the lack of vision in the Sikh leadership and equally the disinterest of the Congress leadership and the British officials. Hence its implications to the Sikhs in post-partition days.

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